Traherne's prose writings and manuscript notebooks: a study of their interrelations with particular reference to Traherne's life at Oxford (1653 - ? 1661) and in London (1669 - 1674)

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis Traherne's prose writings and manuscript notebooks: a study of their interrelations with particular reference to Traherne's life at Oxford (1653 - ? 1661) and in London (1669 - 1674).

Three prose works are of central importance to an understanding of Traherne's practice as "a Philosopher, a Christian and a Divine": the as yet unpublished Select Meditations, the Centuries of Meditations and the Christian Ethicks. Unpublished manuscript notebooks, particularly the Early Notebook, the Ficino Notebook and the Commonplace Book are closely related to these. Focussing on the two most interesting and productive periods of his life, the years spent at Oxford (1653 - ?, possibly 1661) and in London as Chaplain to the Lord Keeper of the Seal, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, (1669 - 1674), this study analyses Traherne's published and unpublished writings in relation to specific aspects of the contemporary world from which they issue and to which they relate.

The vigorous expatiation achieved in Traherne's prose and the intellectual ambitions revealed in his notebooks reflect an insatiable capacity for knowledge and experience. He rejects what he is aware of as the world of "Invention" only in order to idealise the world of "Nature". It is through observation and understanding ("Enjoyment") of this, the physical world, that "Felicity" is sought. This doctrine includes "Practical Happiness" and seeks fulfilment in "Perfect Life" in all senses in the "true Estate of this World". The rejection of the world of invention can be seen as a conscious reaction against "the Customs and Maners of Men" in a society in which the theories of Hobbes, for example, had serious ideological purchase. As a younger contemporary of Pepys and Dryden, Traherne can be seen in relation to the society in which they too lived and wrote. As Chaplain to the holder of the highest state office in Charles II's government he has a natural place in Restoration London. He suggests that he was "admitted to the society and friendship of Great Men". His patron Bridgeman was associated, through his involvement with the Comprehension Bill of 1668, with the Duke of Buckingham and John Wilkins, among others. Burnet suggests that Andrew Marvell can be associated with the cause that Bridgeman sought to promote. In 1673 when, as Burnet observes, "Popery was everywhere preached against", Traherne published Roman Forgeries, an attempt to discredit the authority of the Roman Catholic church.

Traherne expressed particular interest in "Natural Philosophy". This contributes to "Felicity" through "Enjoyment" of God's creation and the "Thanksgiving" that issues from this. The Webster-Ward Debate and the meetings of John Wilkins' experimental philosophy club in Oxford in the 1650's suggest Traherne's proximity to an increasingly significant pursuit. The Early Notebook shows that Traherne read Bacon's De Augmentis Scientiarum at this time. His later writing is haunted by images reflecting preoccupations of contemporary natural philosophy, and his "Divine Philosophy" celebrates the "Common Things" of the physical world. In London the Bridgeman household lived at Essex House in the Strand when the Royal Society was meeting in the neighbouring Arundel House. Richard Cumberland, in a book dedicated to Bridgeman in 1672, describes the Society's "Natural Philosophy" in such a way as to suggest close correspondence between this and Traherne's "Divine Philosophy". Thomas Sprat's The History of the Royal Society (1667) and other works by contemporary natural philosophers, particularly Robert Boyle, emphasize this. As, for Traherne, "Felicity" is achieved through "contemplation of GODs Works", so, for Sprat and the Royal Society, "contemplation of God's visible Works" leads man to millenial fulfilment.

In this study, analysis of the notebooks and their sources, and of aspects of the contemporary milieu from which they and the prose writings issue and to which they relate, is complemented by an exploration of each of the prose writings in an attempt to show the extent and seriousness of Traherne's purpose and his intellectual accomplishment as a major writer of the Restoration period.

PGS/ABST/74/6/00

DECLARATION

required under University regulation 2.4.15.

This thesis has been wholly composed by me and represents the results of my own individual work.

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PART THREE

Abbreviations for the Traherne texts

C	Centuries of Meditations Bodleian Ms. Eng.th.e.50: c.1669-1674
CB	Commonplace Book Bodleian Ms. Eng.poet.c.42: c.1669-1674
CE	Christian Ethicks (1675) Edited by Carol L. Marks and George Robert Guffey New York, 1968
1717 Collection	A Collection of Meditations and Devotions London: For D. Midwinter, 1717 (For: Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation)
CYB	The Church's Year Book Bodleian Ms. Eng.th.e.51: c.1669-1674
EN	Early Notebook Bodleian Ms. Lat.misc.f.45: c.1654-1664
FN	Ficino Notebook British Library Ms. Burney 126: late 1660's
M	Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings Edited by H. M. Margoliouth Two volumes, Oxford, 1958
RF	Roman Forgeries London: By S. and B. Griffin for Jonathan Edwin, 1673
SM	Select Meditations Yale University Library Ms. Osb.88: early 1660s
Thanksgivings	A Serious and Pathetical Contemplation of the Mercies of God, In Several most Devout and Sublime Thanksgivings for the same London: For Samuel Keble, 1699

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Louis L. Martz who has generously made available to me a transcript of the as yet unpublished manuscript of the Select Meditations. Quotations from the Select Meditations appear here by permission of Professor Martz.

Abbreviations

AE John Webster,
Academiarum Examen: or, The Examination of the Academies
London: For Giles Calvert, 1653

AEP Abraham Cowley,
A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy
London: By J. M. for Henry Herringman, 1661

BP Isaac Barrow,
The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor
London: By Andrew Clark for Brabazon Aylmer, 1671

CG Theophilus Gale,
The Court of the Gentiles: or, A Discourse touching the Original of Human Literature
I Oxford: By Henry Hall for Thomas Gilbert, 1669
II Oxford: By William Hall for Thomas Gilbert, 1670
III London: By A. Maxwell for T. Roberts and T. Cockeril, 1677
IV London: By J. Macock for T. Cockeril, 1677

DP *The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus*
Translated by John Everard
London: By Robert White for Thomas Brewster and Gregory Moule, 1650.

EP Henry Power,
Experimental Philosophy
London: By Thomas Roycroft for John Martin and James Allestry, 1664

HRS Thomas Sprat,
The History of the Royal Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge
London: By Thomas Roycroft for John Martin and James Allestry, 1667

MG Robert Hooke,
Micrographia
London: By John Martin for James Allestry, 1665

UEP Robert Boyle,
Some Considerations touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy
London: By Henry Hall for Richard Davis, 1663

VA [Seth Ward and John Wilkins]
Vindiciae Academiarum
Oxford: By Leonard Lichfield for Thomas Robinson, 1654

WFB The Works of Francis Bacon
Edited by James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath
Seven volumes, London, 1857-59

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. Thomas Traherne, 1637-1674

"An Empty Book is like an Infants Soul, in which any Thing may be Written. It is capable of all Things, but containeth Nothing" (C I.1). In the opening of the Centuries of Meditations Traherne proposes the familiar idea of the tabula rasa.[1] For Locke, some twenty years after Traherne was writing, this was a valid epistemological proposition: there are no "native Inscriptions" in the infant's mind, and only experience will "furnish the . . . empty Cabinet" of the mind.[2] Hobbes had already asserted that "there is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of Sense". The "organs of Sense" merely respond to "the motion of externall things".[3]

The "Enriching Truths" Traherne seeks to communicate in the Centuries (C I.1) are "unattainable by Book" (C III.1), so he will "teach them by Experience" (C III.1). This is the function of the parable of his childhood ("I will open my Mouth in Parables", C I.3) offered in the early part of the third Century. There, he "desired to see those Principles which a Stranger in this World would covet to behold upon his first appearance" (C IV.54). He uses his own life as a model. The parable explores the relation of the individual to the world, perceived first through the "Infant Ey" (M II.86-87), later through the "Ey of Reason" (C I.25). The "motion of externall things" is seen to "furnish the . . . empty Cabinet" of the mind. "Capable of all Things", the empty book and the infant's mind are

filled and fulfilled as they trace and react to "externall things".

The element of autobiography in the Centuries, then, has a definite purpose. The autobiography is absorbed into and subordinated to the effort to teach by "Communicating most Enriching Truths" (C I.1) known and articulated from individual experience. Traherne's three major prose works — Select Meditations, Centuries of Meditations, Christian Ethicks — share an educative purpose. This is formally announced in Christian Ethicks, the one of the three works that Traherne sought to publish: "The design of this Treatise is . . . to . . . guide Men . . . in the Way of Vertue . . . and so at last to lead them to true Felicity" (CE 3). Felicity is "the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in perfect Life by Perfect Virtue" (CE 19): it is an ideal form of "perfect Life". In "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20), "the rules of Virtue and Reason" (CE title page, lvi), part of a whole "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) leading to Felicity, can be offered only as "hard lessons in a pervers and Retrograde World to be practiced" (C IV.54). Man must strive, in "This Life" which "is the most precious Season in all Eternity" (C IV.93), for the "perfect Life" of Felicity. "Here therefore is the Place of Trial" (C IV.60). In his striving, man "should be all Life and Mettle and Vigor and Lov to evry Thing" (C II.68). "Practice and Exercise is the Life of all" (C IV.95), and "Philosophers are not those that speak, but Do great things" (C IV.2). The perfect life of Felicity is sought and achieved in "this World", "This Life", by the radical practice of "Divine Philosophy". "The reality of Religion consists in the solid practice of it among the Sons of men that are daily with us" (CE 246).

It is in "a pervers and Retrograde World", then, that Felicity

is sought. "Experience" is crucial, both as a source and means of "Enriching Truths" and their communication. The furnishing of "the empty Cabinet" of the mind, response to "the motion of externall things" — to every influence to which the writer's mind is open — is vital. The books are written as part of and issue from the life of the "Soul". "Capable of all Things", both book and "Soul" achieve a definite realisation through "Experience" and its articulation in "this World", "This Life", the one actual and particular life of Thomas Traherne, 1637-1674.

2. Traherne and the critics, 1900-1978

Before outlining the materials and method of this thesis, some account can be given of the critical attention Traherne's work has received. Traherne was "discovered" by Bertram Dobell at the turn of this century, some 225 years after his death. The first public announcement of his existence as a poet in fact appeared in 1900,[4] followed in 1903 by Dobell's edition of the thirty-seven poems in the folio manuscript he had purchased from Alexander Grosart's library.[5] At the same time he had acquired a small octavo manuscript containing the Centuries of Meditations, which he published in 1908.[6] His attribution of these two manuscripts to Traherne took at least three years to reach certainty and involved a considerable gift for detection: the full story is told by Gladys Wade.[7] Traherne's name and a vague biographical identity were established by way of his connection with Sir Orlando Bridgeman and, with the help of a reference in Anthony Wood's Athenae Oxoniensis, through his authorship of Roman Forgeries, Christian Ethicks and the Thanksgivings. Confirmation rested largely on the correspondence of a certain verse

passage in the Centuries (C III.21; see M I.274) with that in Christian Ethicks (CE 181). In 1910 H. I. Bell published the sixty-one Poems of Felicity which had remained unrecognised in a manuscript in the British Museum until Dobell's edition of some of the same poems in somewhat different versions identified them as Traherne's.[8] Details of the manuscripts and their contents will be found elsewhere in this thesis. The material used by Dobell in tracing Traherne's identity is reprinted, together with almost all the known biographical facts and their sources, in H. M. Margoliouth's now standard edition of the Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings (M I. xxiii-xxxviii).

Had Alexander Grosart not died in 1899 and the two manuscripts not been sold to Dobell, the thirty-seven poems of the "Dobell Folio" would probably have appeared in Grosart's projected edition of the poetry of Henry Vaughan as newly discovered work by Vaughan himself.[9] Only Dobell's conviction that this attribution was wrong guaranteed the discovery of Traherne as an independent writer. It was as a poet, however, and a poet very much in the manner of Vaughan, that Traherne was at first regarded in the articles that appeared both before the prose of the Centuries became public, and in those written when the Centuries were more widely available.[10] Traherne's work was identified with a particular type of "religious" or "spiritual" poetry, and comparisons and contrasts were drawn with Herbert or Vaughan. His work began to appear in anthologies and selections of a kind from which it has since rarely been absent.[11] From "religious" and "spiritual" to "mystical" was no great step in critical terminology, and these three adjectives, together with the identification of a certain type or even genre of poetry held in

common with Herbert and/or Vaughan, dominated criticism of Traherne then as they often have since.

Dobell's conviction of Traherne's individuality and originality remains valid, however, and is reinforced when attention focusses on the Centuries. The early impulse was to use these as "background" to the poetry and its themes and ideas, but, often through the examination of Traherne's "mysticism", the combined study of poetry and prose issued in an approach inclined more to philosophical speculation than purely literary discussion and evaluation.[12] If the first theme in Traherne criticism was, and often remains, to borrow the title of an early article, "Thomas Traherne and the Religious Poetry of the Seventeenth Century", the next to emerge, and one that subsequent events may have proved to have more staying power, is that of "Thomas Traherne: A Divine Philosopher".[13] For commentators in this latter tradition Traherne is predominantly a prose writer, and prose, due to a revival of interest in the Christian Ethicks and the discovery in 1964 of the Select Meditations, now forms a more significant part of his extant work. It is also now widely argued that it is the prose that has the stronger claim to literary distinction.

Two articles by T. O. Beachcroft, appearing in 1930, sought more explicitly defined areas for discussion of Traherne's prose and of his thought.[14] An anonymous article had previously characterized Traherne as "A 'Student of Felicity'", thus introducing what was to become another theme of Traherne criticism. Beachcroft attempted to establish the notion of "Felicity" as a "Doctrine" but also, more valuably, introduced for the first time an extended consideration of Traherne's relation to the Cambridge Platonists.

Both of these discussions have been taken up again by other writers, but to surprisingly little positive effect until, perhaps, the last ten or fifteen years and the work of Carol Marks in the 1960's.[15] The importance of Felicity to Traherne and the similarity of much of his work to that of the Cambridge Platonists is now obvious but remains undefined.

The most sensitive, and in many ways the most rigorous, early study of Traherne is that by Q. Iredale.[16] This book still claims the attention of the student of Traherne: its factual discussion is more extensive than several more recent studies and it is in comparison with these that it might be said to gain rather than lose by the avoidance (for at least part of its course) of more subjective evaluation. Although her book can claim to be no more than a concise survey, Iredale was among the first critics to approach Traherne's writing, verse and prose (including Christian Ethicks), as a whole and to let each take its own weight and emphasis within a more general discussion. Her central thesis concerns Traherne's notion of the expression of the divine in the works of nature, this being, she says, the central "truth" of all his work: "The poet's passion for beauty, the philosopher's search for truth, and the moralist's devotion to goodness were avenues beginning in different places, but ending in one reality".[17] This is reinforced by a genuine examination of numerous aspects of Traherne's thought and writing: his interest in philosophical, theological and metaphysical questions and, indeed, his intellectual curiosity as a whole. The assertion of a central inclusive truth or reality to which all knowledge and experience contributes means, Iredale claims, that, for Traherne, the world, man's life in it and discovery of it, is

always a revelation, and that it is through seeing, feeling and thinking more thoroughly and clearly that man's Felicity, his complete fulfilment, is best sought: everything can lead to Felicity. Traherne is allowed by Iredale a new intellectual dimension in her definition of his debt to the Bible, to Plato and Aristotle, to Plotinus, the Hermetica and Francis Bacon, while the possible connections of his work with that of Descartes (his arguments for the necessary existence of God from the knowledge of his own existence and that of the world) and that of Berkeley (his emphasis on the need for subjective sympathy in the appreciation of the objective) are also mentioned. Iredale points the possibility of Traherne's interest in contemporary issues — in controversies between the English and Roman Churches (Roman Forgeries), and between monarchy and parliament (C I.4, 61 etc.), and in science (C III.44) which could be valuable as an "expression of the divine".[18] The Cambridge Platonists, she suggests, are interesting in their tendency, comparable to Traherne's, to deal in questions of material beauty rather than the more obscure imagery and symbolism of other neo-platonists, and in their belief that "A man cannot open his eye, nor lend his ear, but everything will declare more or less of God".[19] Iredale complements these observations by more subjective remarks about Traherne's interest in childhood, education, psychology and perception.

During the same period Gladys Wade published her first work on Traherne. Two articles pursued by now familiar themes,[20] but her mention of Traherne in her article on Susanna Hopton suggests the biographical emphasis that was to culminate, in 1944, in the first major book on Traherne.[21] In 1932 Wade had produced an

edition of the poems including, for the first time, both those of the "Dobell Folio" and the Poems of Felicity with the poems from the prose writings.[22] This and subsequent work equipped her to write the first, and still the only, biography of Traherne. Painstaking research into Herefordshire parish registers and many other sources was not, however, rewarded by major discoveries sufficient to fill out a complete biographical portrait of Traherne. Nor did Wade avoid falling back on conjecture where the known facts are slight. Some important details were brought to light, and some of the conjecture can perhaps be forgiven in so far as Traherne does seem to take on an independent life while what little is known is rehearsed in a biographical context. For Traherne's real biography, though, the reader can now turn only to the fragmentary material reprinted by Margoliouth (M I. xxiii-xxxviii) where the facts (rather, the contemporary records and related dateable events) are not obscured by an author's claim to draw a complete biographical portrait. Wade herself admits that for some periods of Traherne's life documentary evidence is practically non-existent. Her biography survives this handicap by her sometimes over-inventive resourcefulness. Traherne's possible connection with Philip Traherne, Mayor of Hereford during the Civil Wars, can have nothing of the certainty that Wade claims for it, while the sentimental and entirely speculative possibility of his adolescent love affair is wholly unfounded.[23] Wade can be illuminating, however, in reflecting that Traherne's position as Sir Orlando Bridgeman's Chaplain might be "an appointment far more important both in its powers of influence and as a stepping stone for ambition ~~that~~ than one might at first realise".[24]

Wade's discussions of Traherne's writings are as scholarly as her biographical research. She includes a chapter on Roman Forgeries as evidence of "the intellectual quality and austerity of Traherne".[25] Assuming that all three parts of the 1717 Collection are by Traherne and Susanna Hopton writing jointly, she quotes the Preface to the Daily Devotions as characterising Traherne's writing: "very Rational, Comprehensive, and Emphatical".[26] Wade's discussion of Christian Ethicks notes both the debt to Platonic and Aristotelian traditions and Traherne's relation to Jeremy Taylor, Hobbes and other seventeenth century writers. Christian Ethicks and the Centuries both emphasize Traherne's quality and individuality as a prose writer, Wade claims: he is said by her to anticipate by twenty-five years "the triumph of [a] new style" of prose writing achieved by Dryden in the Preface to the Fables (1700) and to demonstrate a significant process of change "in our manner of writing English between 1660 and 1710."[27] The Centuries, Wade claims, have no literary ancestry despite some similarity with Augustine's Confessions (397-401). For all their uniqueness, Traherne's writings have, for Wade, definite points of contact with the time at which he lived. For her he saw himself as a philosopher imparting a new and significant philosophy to meet an urgent human need. She notes, however, Traherne's "minor rank . . . as a poet" despite the high intellectual quality of his poetry. For Wade, finally, Traherne is "Christian, Platonist, Mystic".[28]

For its time, and despite a certain amount of conjecture and personalized reading, Wade's study might be called definitive. Yet it did not establish a starting point for other studies, which still sought their own terms for discussion. Traherne as a poet had been

initiated into the "metaphysical" school, and Wade's reservations about his "minor rank . . . as a poet" have not prevented the appearance of his work in anthologies and discussions focussing on poetry written, in many instances, at least half a century before Traherne's: both Donne and Herbert, for example, died before Traherne was born.[29] Philosophical and poetic aspects might occasionally be combined.[30] The anthologising and discussion of Traherne as poet, metaphysical or otherwise, need not necessarily be questioned, but it can need to be counteracted by drawing attention to the prose. Wade, in 1944, the author of, for its kind, a definitive study of Traherne, involving much considered reading of his own and contemporary work, asserted his original and individual achievement as a prose writer, an achievement which, by comparison, puts his poetry in a "minor rank". Wade was also the editor of the then standard edition of the poems. Yet, over thirty years later, it is reasonable to assume that for a majority of readers Traherne is in the first instance a poet. The origins of this somewhat anomalous situation cannot be adequately traced here, but they are apparent simply in the fact that it is impossible to discuss previous Traherne criticism without considerable mention of the poetry. There has been extensive criticism of the prose but this is probably outweighed, in effect if not in quantity, by that concentrating on the poetry.

There is a further irony in the critical history of Traherne's poetry and prose. One of the most highly regarded essays on the Centuries is that in Louis Martz's The Paradise Within (1964).[31] More influential still, however, has been Martz's earlier book,

The Poetry of Meditation (1954).[32] This study included no discussion of Traherne, but its influence is such that it demands attention in any study of seventeenth century religious literature. Martz proposes a "poetry of meditation" rather than "metaphysical poetry" as a common tradition. His thesis of the "poetry of meditation" is, he claims, "among the several necessary methods of approaching a full understanding of English literature in the seventeenth century".[33] Further, "methods of religious meditation . . . lay at the heart of the century's spiritual life and provided a radiant center for religious literature of every kind".[34] The art of meditation is, he also claims, close to the art of poetry in any age. He cites Coleridge, D. H. Lawrence and Wallace Stevens as examples of this. His theories have had considerable influence. Despite Traherne's absence from The Poetry of Meditation, the book does seem to characterize what has become a common view of Traherne, a common critical image. This includes involvement with recondite medieval theories and theorists (Martz discusses Jean le Charlier de Gerson, Luis de Granada, Lorenzo Scupoli and Luis de la Puente among others), a meditative tendency towards various means of withdrawal from the world, and a concern for gradations of mystical experience.

The relevance of Martz's earlier study to Traherne is therefore tenuous but might nevertheless be traced. The book remains useful in characterizing a certain, perhaps dominant, attitude to Traherne, whether originally intended to relate to him or not. This attitude envisages Traherne as the withdrawn mystic in meditation, communing silently and inwardly with a transcendent deity. By 1958, for example, John Wallace had found

in the thrity-seven poems of the "Dobell Folio" a "complete five part meditation which fulfils all the major conditions of a Jesuit exercise".[35] Emphasizing once again that Martz himself does not specifically apply his theories to Traherne, it must be said that many of his basic ideas and assumptions about the "poetry of meditation", in the cogent and extensive expression they are given in the book, seem to be very attractive to other readers and critics of Traherne. It should not be inferred that Martz's book is responsible for all other comment applying "meditative" terms to Traherne, but it remains the best and most thorough expression of those terms.

Turning to Martz's essay on Traherne in The Paradise Within, however, his earlier theories still seem to permeate the new book's background. The "paradise" sought by Traherne, as by Vaughan and Milton, is again, Martz claims, an internal one, partaking of many of the characteristics of withdrawn introspective meditation if not so strictly organised on the principles of the spiritual handbooks Martz had previously discussed. The earlier claim for the "poetry of meditation" being "at the heart of the century's spiritual life" should clearly be taken as read, for, in The Paradise Within, "meditation" is, for Martz, something to be expected of any seventeenth century religious writer: "the Centuries may be seen as Augustinian, in theme, in style, in method of meditation".[36] Martz's study seeks to illustrate ways in which Traherne sought in his writing "the Augustinian vision of a paradise within".[37] He is indebted, Martz believes, to Augustine's idea of "illumination" and "inner light" and the desire to bring out the image of God in man. Platonic thought,

Martz claims, enjoyed a powerful revival after the middle of the seventeenth century as men sought ways towards God outside the ecclesiastical establishment, but, for Traherne, he says, it is only in "a central Augustinian view" that his "strong Platonic and Hermetic interests cohere": "the principles of Augustine seem to have formed the nucleus around which all the literature of Platonism, pagan and Christian, gathered to help Traherne create his own original exploration of the mind".[38]

Martz's essay gains its impressive unity by focussing on the Centuries and offering an approach based on theological and philosophical analogy, and on literary technique. For Martz, the Centuries are consciously organized in a manner similar to that of Augustine's Confessions: he speaks of a "technique, so deliberately, so relentlessly pursued by Traherne", a "literary technique" and a "central characteristic of style" that is throughout strongly reminiscent of Augustine.[39] Martz's tone of assurance is rare among critics of Traherne: his central and unified view rests on the conviction that "in theme, in style, in method" the Centuries show Augustinian influence and can be analysed, as Martz does analyse them, in terms of an Augustinian work: Bonaventura's Itinerarium Mentis in Deum (1472), "an influential older synthesis, available to Traherne".[40]

Gladys Wade's critical biography of Traherne had been followed by a number of articles reflecting a continuing desire to establish detailed factual information about his life. The search for information culminated in the still definitive edition of the Centuries, Poems and Thanksgivings by H. M. Margoliouth which reprints all the known materials from which Traherne's biography

can be constructed. The appearance of this authoritative edition, the first to attempt to give the Centuries in original spelling and preserve Traherne's characteristic punctuation and capitalisation, marks the beginning of a new period of Traherne studies.

The Paradise Within, of course, belongs in this recent period and in fact included an appendix on the Select Meditations, then (in 1964) recently discovered by James Osborn.[41] The appearance of this manuscript in print is still awaited, but the authors of several studies of Traherne have since been allowed some access to the manuscript. Martz maintained that the Select Meditations confirmed his Augustinian interpretation. In the same year the whole ground of Traherne's work was again surveyed in what remains a useful general introduction to the work as a whole, ~~Kenneth~~ Keith Salter's Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet (1964).[42] Salter gives some account of all Traherne's writings and mounts a general discussion. Bacon, Browne, Hobbes and Locke feature in his introduction, but the context is not entirely historical. Salter seeks to define Traherne's thought, his insistence that the studies of God and nature cannot be separated, and that reason is the light of God within man, by comparison with other writers. He thus quotes from Shakespeare (Hamlet's "What a piece of work is a man . . . ") to introduce Traherne's sense of wonder. His biographical chapter suggests a "background": Brasenose was a Puritan college, Susanna Hopton's religous circle may be compared to Nicholas Ferrar's at Little Gidding, Sir Orlando Bridgeman was a friend and correspondent of Henry More. The chapter on "Traherne and his Times" places Traherne in a general, mainly literary, context ranging from

Shakespeare to Addison with some mention of the Cambridge Platonists who, like Traherne, observes Salter, were assured that God is not to be reached by abstract theoretical discourse but by immediate experience.

Salter's central theme is indicated by his sub-title: Traherne is for him "Mystic and Poet".[43] Major chapters of the book deal with "Limitations of Traherne's Mystical Experience" or "The Illumination of Traherne", while Salter defines the three stages of what he calls Traherne's "Spiritual Progress": 1. Immediate and intuitive experience; 2. Fall, the "Apostasie" of C III.2; 3. Progress to Felicity by the "Highest Reason" (C III.2). Aristotle, Aquinas and scholasticism are, for Salter, the essential clues to Traherne's thought. He uses Evelyn Underhill's Mysticism (1912) as a guide in charting Traherne's "mystical" experience and the expression of it. The Centuries, like the recently discovered Select Meditations, are valuable to Salter, but his title places these as, albeit essential, background to his portrait of Traherne as "Mystic and Poet".

Four articles dealing with specific aspects of Traherne's work may be considered as representative of the more consise comment of recent years. Margaret Bottrall examines Traherne's view of the natural world and, allied with this, his insistence on the need for man's expression of gratitude and thanksgiving.[44] Traherne's "passionate intellectuality", she says, urged him, like Aquinas, to see man related at once to God and the whole of creation.[45] To achieve this, man must attempt to understand the world, and, in understanding it, return praise for it. Traherne's notions of perception also receive attention: "Not things, but thoughts of things are what he values; for what, he asks, would the works of

the Creator mean without the intelligence of man to respond to them? . . . Traherne is the equal of Blake in his insistence on the paramount importance of this power of imaginative discernment".[46]

G. H. Cox, writing soon after the appearance of Martz's The Paradise Within, questions Martz's assumptions and his use of Bonaventura's Itinerarium Mentis in Deum.[47] His conclusions are based on some work on Traherne's manuscript notebooks: "Traherne's notebooks tell us a great deal about his reading, and these reveal indebtedness not to Bonaventura but to Renaissance commentaries on Plato . . . Traherne followed a different principle of order altogether: one that was Platonic rather than Augustinian".[48] This study is limited to the Centuries and concentrates on particular aspects of Traherne's "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) without clearly identifying or distinguishing the "Renaissance commentaries on Plato" or offering an overall view of Traherne's own synthesis.

A valuable article by S. Sandbank is more explicit.[49] Concentrating almost exclusively on the poetry, Sandbank derives Traherne's thought directly from Ficino's versions of Plato. This, for him, is the solution to the sense of confusion that he honestly notes as the experience of many critics of Traherne: "One tends to get lost, on a first reading of Thomas Traherne's poetry and prose, in what looks like an effusive overflow of vague pantheistic emotion. God, man and the world seem to interweave and intermingle until they become hardly distinguishable from one another".[50] He concludes, after an examination of the correspondences between the thought of Traherne and Ficino (with closest reference to the poetry), that Traherne's work "may be regarded as a re-affirmation of the old

integrated world-picture, as against the notorious removal of faith from the realm of nature".[51] In almost direct contrast to this view is that of Robert Ellrodt.[52] In his study of the poetry he concludes that "the spirit of the new age is not merely reflected in [Traherne's] passion for the infinite, in the joy and wonder evoked by the prospect of a plurality of worlds or the anatomical perfection of the human body: it is also secretly responsible for a utilitarian emphasis, transfigured yet discernable in the mystic's doctrine of felicity".[53] It may be noted that, despite his use of scientific imagery, and Ellrodt's emphasis on a utilitarian aspect to Felicity, Traherne remains a "mystic".

Science and the imagery associated with it was central to Marjorie Hope Nicolson's remarks on Traherne in The Breaking of the Circle (1950), one of a number of general studies making some illuminating comment on Traherne.[54] "We know now that Traherne was deeply affected by the discoveries of the new science and the implications of the new philosophy. When he saw eternity in a grain of sand, he was speaking not only mystically but microscopically".[55] Nicolson does not say exactly how "We know" that Traherne was "deeply affected" by the "new science" and "new philosophy" but she makes an initial attempt to demolish some of the traditional barriers between seventeenth century "literary" and "scientific" writing: "The greatest exponents of aspiration were scientists who, in prefaces and conclusions to their scientific works, spoke a language as enthusiastic as Traherne's".[56] She particularly mentions Henry Power in this context. Again, although Traherne speaks "microscopically" about the grain of sand he is also said to speak "mystically".

In another general study of seventeenth century literature, Rosalie Colie considered a particular aspect of contemporary science in relation to Traherne: "the idea of infinity informs his style, his psychology, his cosmology, his metaphysics, and his theology".[57] For Colie, Traherne found that Renaissance Platonism (represented, she says, by Ficino and Pico della Mirandola) was ultimately inadequate to Traherne's own vision and his personal synthesis of theology and metaphysics. In contemporary platonism and science, however, she sees correspondence with Traherne's own view: "For Traherne infinite cosmological space demonstrated by the new astronomy offered a proper habitation for a God long recognized as infinite".[58] "Traherne found that the old images of a contained infinity, the sphere, the circle, the globe, and the ring, would not do: his concept of infinity forced itself beyond the 'circle of perfection' to communicate to men the idea of a limitlessly abundant Deity".[59] Colie also offers a brief consideration of the essential features of Traherne's style. She well defines the spontaneous, enthusiastic and often-repeated sense of understanding and assurance that issues from the outgoing and overflowing prose: Traherne, she says, "has caught the full and filling plenitude of things . . . [in] . . . the very process of writing, in which the true meaning of all things is revealed as revealing itself".[60] Also among general studies of contemporary literature should be mentioned Maren-Sofie Røstvig's The Happy Man (1954).[61] She too emphasizes the dominance of Platonic ideas in Traherne's notion of Felicity and speaks of the Platonic purification of sensory experience that overlays Traherne's attitude to life and the world.

While the most recent studies of Traherne reveal an increase in the amount of criticism being produced, little new ground has been covered. Perhaps the most detailed study of Traherne's ideas and thought is an unpublished dissertation by Brian Connolly.[62] Basing his study on an aphorism in Christian Ethicks — "Knowledge and Love are so necessary to Felicity, that there can be no Enjoyment or Delight without them" (CE 36) — Connolly does not hesitate to portray Traherne as a philosopher, and suggests that "Knowledge" and "Love", two essential aspects of the ultimate good, Felicity, are philosophically and rationally conceived: "with the curiosity of a psychologist [Traherne] explores the nature and degrees of knowledge", for "an intellectualist like Traherne never ignored the fact that all love has its roots in cognition".[63] From the intellectual and psychological exploration of knowledge and love Connolly suggests that Traherne can be said to have evolved a "theory of knowledge" that is "greatly original".[64] He concludes, however, that while this theory of knowledge is more than "a mosaic of philosophical reminiscences", it cannot be seen as "a systematized philosophy".[65]

The first of the two most recent studies of Traherne is contained in a survey of seventeenth century prose by Joan Webber, The Eloquent 'I' (1968).[66] She finds in the Centuries "the writer's crucial and unremitting awareness that he is the subject of his own prose".[67] Traherne is, for Webber, a complete man and thinker: "his mind is originally philosophical, his conclusions self-tried".[68] She suggests that he recognizes in all existence a sense of discontinuity, and that he takes upon himself the task of overcoming this. Webber claims that in his prose "I", "you", "thou" and "he"

all represent a divided humanity which strives to achieve unity with God. This striving is reflected, she suggests, in Traherne's autobiographical account of his own progress from isolation to communion. In his prose he seeks to overcome the fragmentary and discontinuous nature of all things by endowing them with meaning and reality and sustaining them in his own mind, seeing them as aspects of the unified wholeness towards which he strives. Ultimately the prose achieves a unity: "I", "you", "thou" and "he" all becoming one. The characteristically highly charged, effusive and out-going prose of Traherne is seen by Webber to seek an "interpenetration of meaning" that will lead to all things achieving rest in communion and oneness.[69] In the energetic process necessary to this, however, Webber suggests that Traherne in his writing is "better described as overflowing than as meditating".[70] "He belongs", however, "with the earlier Anglican writers, stylistically, in his whole emotional outlook, and in his basic beliefs".[71]

Stanley Stewart's full length study of all Traherne's writings, The Expanded Voice (1970),[72] also concerns itself with what Stewart calls Traherne's "strategies" of authorship — in the Centuries, an authorship which is in a sense shared with Susanna Hopton, he suggests. Stewart treats the Centuries as autobiography, comparing Traherne's method with that of Pepys, Evelyn and the fictional Tristram Shandy, pointing the "literary" nature of the Centuries by showing that the writing is determined by Traherne's own "Apprehensions" and his generalisations of his own life rather than by the desire for factual narrative: he speaks of "Adam in Paradice" (C III.1) rather than his own father, for example.

Traherne's identity is said by Stewart to be permeated and extended and his style to be in contrast to that of diarists recording a univocal single life. Further, Traherne's autobiography is, in the Centuries, dispersed and allegorical: "The sphere of the speaker's being is always expanding, as times and places are swallowed up by eternity and the infinite".[73] Stewart's study of the poems extends John Wallace's theory that the poems of the "Dobell Folio" are arranged in sequence as a Jesuit meditation: Stewart applies a similar analysis to the Burney manuscript of the Poems of Felicity, based on the assumption that there is again a particular structural intention behind the order in which the poems appear in the manuscript. He also sees the poems as a reply to and reaction against the "metaphysical school" and quotes "The Author to the Critical Peruser" (M II.2-3) as evidence for his view. Stewart also offers an answer to the many critics who have supported Margaret Bottrall's observation that Traherne has "a strong tendency to offer a list of objects or epithets rather than a distinctive impression" in his poems.[74] Stewart compares this tendency with a Renaissance rhetorical figure, "Sinathrismus", "the heaping figure", in which, according to Puttenham, the writer is motivated to "go it by heapes as if [he] would winne the game by multitude of words and speeches, not all of one but of divers matter and sence".[75] This, for Stewart, is part of the syntactical shifting and dislocation that characterizes the prose of the Centuries and is part of Traherne's method of undermining verbal boudaries in seeking some utterance that is really beyond words.

Three other recent studies of Traherne restrict themselves to

particular aspects of the writing, and all, as is indicated by their titles, emphasize the importance of mystical thought and awareness in the work. These are A. L. Clements' The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne (1969); A. J. Sherrington's Mystical Symbolism in the Poetry of Thomas Traherne (1970); and R. D. Jordan's The Temple of Eternity (1970).[76] In contrast, the main impulse of Carol Marks' work on Traherne has been factual and bibliographical. Apart from a speculative article on "Thomas Traherne and Cambridge Platonism" (1966)[77] her publications have been wholly bibliographical or editorial. In her co-operation with George Guffey on the extensive critical apparatus of the first modern scholarly edition of Christian Ethicks (1968) she has established a new and more objective basis for consideration of Traherne.[78] Recent studies, however, show little inclination to accept this basis or to pursue the numerous avenues of research that Marks' work suggests. This edition of Christian Ethicks and Marks' bibliographical analyses of the unpublished manuscript notebooks, which appeared in Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America between 1964 and 1969,[79] suggest possibilities for the recognition of Traherne as a major writer of the Restoration period, a writer no longer isolated from the contemporary intellectual milieu. He is in fact unique in that the majority of his writings survive in manuscript, together with a substantial body of unpublished manuscript notebooks: this is true of no other comparable seventeenth century writer. Both writings and notebooks can be regarded as essential reflections not only of Traherne's own mind but of the age in which he lived. It is from this substantial material that a more thorough and coherent portrait

of Traherne's life and work may be drawn. Whether his work is Augustinian (Martz) or Platonic (Cox), "a re-affirmation of the old integrated world picture" (Sandbank) or a reflection of "the spirit of the new age" (Ellrodt) — or whether it adheres, more or less, to any other of the many critical paradoxes his work has inspired — there does exist a large body of material for a more empirical study of Traherne. It is on the particular and peculiar unity of text and context — of original work and notebook material and the specific historical circumstances from which they issue — that this study may be based.

3. Text and context, 1653-1674

Very little, then, is known of Traherne's life in any straightforward biographical sense. He was born, probably in Hereford, in 1637, and matriculated at Brasenose College in 1653. He gained the Oxford degrees of B.A. (1656), M.A. (1661) and B.D. (1669). He was appointed Rector of the village of Credenhill in Herefordshire both under the Commonwealth (in 1657) and under the restored monarchy (in 1661). In 1669 he became Chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Charles II's Lord Keeper of the Seal. Until his death in 1674 he lived either at Essex House in the Strand, Bridgeman's London mansion, or at the Bridgeman home at nearby Teddington. He was buried in Teddington in October 1674.

As Carol Marks' work in the 1960's showed, however, Traherne's written remains are extensive and of unique interest. It is remarkable that so few critics have made thorough use of the wealth of material available. This thesis seeks a comprehensive view of Traherne and his writing through contextural analysis and discussion

of three major prose texts — the Select Meditations, Centuries of Meditations and Christian Ethicks — and of two substantial unpublished notebooks — the Early Notebook and Commonplace Book. The aim is to establish the credibility of the three prose works as major and integral contributions to Restoration writing and to contemporary apprehension of "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20), of the particular historical world in which Traherne lived and wrote. It is an assumption implicit in the thesis that writing is, in some form and at whatever apparent distance, a way of looking at and relating to a known human world shared with other people. It is an opening onto historically shared experience, onto all the activity, the whole life and thought, doubts, assumptions and beliefs, of real people in specific places at particular times.

The essential features of the suggested reading of Traherne's work are threefold. Vital to all aspects of this is the idea that Traherne may have fully deserved the title of "Philosopher" that he claimed for himself (C IV.3) and that his "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) is a real philosophy, with direct bearing upon "the true Estate of this World". In one notebook he writes of the "Sweet Methods of Meditation" (CYB 75^{v}), but elsewhere he asserts that "There is a Glory in the Work which the silent Habit is uncapable of" (CE 191): his writing, like his "Thoughts", must "expaciate without Limit or Restraint" (C V.2) over "All Things", the "Objects of Felicity" (C II.100). He was "a concerned person in all Transactions . . . ever present with all Affairs" (C IV.69). If he does "Contemn the World" (C I.7) it is crucial that "there are two Worlds" (C I.7): one, "a Prison" (C I.36), to be condemned, the other "a very Paradice" (C I.20) "made to be Enjoyed" (C I.10), in which "We should be all

Life and Mettle and Vigor and Lov to evry Thing" (C II.68). The "two Worlds" can be seen not as two separate worlds, but simply as two ways of looking at the one real world: "the World is both a Paradice and a Prison to different Persons" (C I.36). The world is "Enjoyed" by "Meditation" (C I.8), but "Meditation" is only "thinking Well" (C I.8): it is all the complexity and "Difficulty of thinking Well" (C I.8) that Traherne's writing demonstrates, questions and finally celebrates in the realisation, through "Enjoyment of the World" (C I.25), that the world is "a very Paradice" and that it is in this paradise that man may achieve Felicity.

It is also important to recall Traherne's genuine historical situation. It is, in large part at least, consideration of his poetry as a manifestation of the metaphysical or meditative manner that has obscured this. Both Donne (1572-1631) and Herbert (1593-1633), for example, died before Traherne was born: they belong, almost, to another world. All of Traherne's original writing dates from after the national experience of revolution and restoration: the regicide of 1649 and the return of Charles II in 1660 are indices, if limited ones, of the changes that took place in England during Traherne's early life. Hobbes (1588-1679), Milton (1608-1674), Marvell (1621-1678) and Vaughan (1622-1695) survived as Traherne's older contemporaries — Leviathan (1651) was published just before he went up to Oxford — while Traherne is more truly a contemporary of Boyle (1627-1691), Dryden (1631-1700), Locke (1631-1704), Pepys (1633-1703), Etherege (1634?-1691?), Hooke (1635-1703), Sprat (1635-1713), Wycherley (1640-1716), Newton (1642-1727) and Rochester (1648-1680). "No reader of the 'Select Meditations'

could ever conceive of calling this author a 'poet of felicity'".[80] No: but so easy a phrase dies hard. If it seems difficult to reconcile Traherne's "Divine Philosophy" with the world of Hobbes and Rochester, for example, a quotation from Rochester's "A Satyr against Reason and Mankind" (c.1675) might help. Rochester imagines himself berated by "some formal band and beard", a clergyman, thus:

> What rage ferments in your degenerate mind
> To make you rail at reason and mankind?
> Blest, glorious man! to whom alone kind heaven
> An everlasting soul has freely given,
> Whom his great Maker took such care to make
> That from himself he did the image take
> And this fair frame in shining reason dressed
> To dignify his nature above beast;
> Reason, by whose aspiring influence
> We take a flight beyond material sense,
> Dive into mysteries, then soaring pierce
> The flaming limits of the universe,
> Search heaven and hell, find out what's acted there
> And give the world true grounds of hope and fear.[81]

The clergyman celebrates a "supernatural gift, that makes a mite / Think he's the image of the infinite": "each heavy sot can pierce / The limits of the boundless universe".[82] There could be no more thorough recognition of the real contemporary presence of clerics espousing a "Divine Philosophy" clearly very thoroughly analogous to Traherne's own. There are, Rochester says, "modern cloistered coxcombs who / Retire to think, 'cause they have nought else to do".[83] Is Traherne among these? To the idea of cloistered retirement Rochester opposes precisely that concept of philosophical action that Traherne also emphasized when he said that "Philosophers are not those that speak, but Do great things" (C IV.2): "thoughts are given for action's government; / Where action ceases, thought's impertinent. / Our sphere of action is life's happiness".[84] Other contemporaries — Robert Boyle, for example — sought an attitude

to "Blest, glorious man!" and his life in the world very similar to that of both Traherne and Rochester's cleric. If Traherne was a "cloistered coxcomb" a good many contemporaries — "scientists" among them —shared this retirement.

"Your reason hinders, mine helps to enjoy", Rochester says to his imaginary cleric.[85] "Enjoyment" is an important word for Traherne. In Milton's Paradise Lost (1667; revised edition 1674), Michael says to Adam:

> thou hast attaind the summe
> Of wisdome; hope no higher, though all the Starrs
> Thou knewst by name, and all th'ethereal Powers,
> All secrets of the deep, all Natures works,
> Or works of God in Heav'n, Aire, Earth, or Sea,
> And all the riches of this World enjoydst,[86]

this will be of little profit without "Deeds to thy knowledge answerable".[87] With these, and with "Faith, . . . vertue, Patience, Temperance, . . . [and] . . . Love, By name to come call'd Charitie",[88] Adam will possess "A paradise within . . . happier farr": he should therefore descend from the "top of Speculation".[89] Adam should renounce "enjoyment" of "all the riches of this world" in favour of a "paradise within". For Traherne, in contrast, it is precisely by "Enjoyment of the World" (C I.25) that Felicity will be achieved: it is "this World" that is his "Paradice" (C IV.20, I.20). "The Articles of our faith are the objects of Enjoyment proposed to Speculation" (SM III.58). "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's kingdom" (SM III.9), so man must "enjoy this Adspectable world" (SM III.9) to the full. It is thus that, by "Right Reason", man will "discover all the Mysteries of heaven" (C IV.81). Traherne celebrates the "top Of Speculation" rather than the "paradise within" and, through the discoveries of "Right Reason",

seeks to establish man's Felicity, the full realisation of his "Activ" and "Contemplativ" "Happiness" (C IV.1), by "Enjoyment of the World". For Traherne, as for Rochester, "Our sphere of action is life's happiness".

Firstly, then, it can be shown that Traherne, and his "Divine Philosophy", was "concerned in all the World" (C III.23). "This Life is the most precious Season in all Eternity" (C IV.93). Felicity demands "Activ" as well as "Contemplativ" "Happiness" (C IV.1): the philosopher must act, philosophy must help men in all their activity. Felicity is "perfect Life", the perfection of man's whole existence and living practice, the thorough exercise of his whole Capacity. As the ideal of a whole philosophy Felicity is a guide to both active and contemplative happiness in "the true Estate of this World": both a real and viable moral ideal based on virtue and reason and a reflection of a reaction to "the true Estate of this World".

Secondly, the extent of Traherne's intellectual achievement and ambition should be realised. "Knowledge" (C III.42), "the Learning of all Universities" (C I.54), is essential to Felicity. Traherne's own learning was extensive: it permeates all his writing and is particularly evident in his notebooks. The Commonplace Book, for example, demonstrates his acquaintance with the work of Aristarchus, Aristotle, Bacon, Boyle, Brahe, Copernicus, Democritus, Echphantus, Epicurus, Galileo, Kepler, Leucippus, Parmenides, Plato, Pythagoras, Xenophanes and Zeno among many others, and is alone indicative of only one aspect of his intellectual accomplishment. The concise Roman Forgeries shows how Traherne found his way through what Milton called "the Labyrinth of Councels

and Fathers".[90] "I saw that Logick, Ethicks, Physicks, Metaphysicks, Geometry, Astronomy, Poesie, Medicine, Grammer, Musick, Rhetorick, all kind of Arts Trades and Mechanismes that Adorned the World pertained to felicity" (C III.36). Traherne's intellectual capacity is immense and brought fully to bear in all his writing.

Thirdly, Traherne was particularly interested in "Natural Philosophy" (C III.44). This "Noble Science, as such is most Sublime and Perfect, it includes all Humanity and Divinity together . . . it is Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends: for it Openeth the Riches of Gods Kingdom . . . Clearing and preparing the Ey of the Enjoyer" (C III.44). Natural philosophy is connected with Traherne's important notion of "Enjoyment of the World" (C I.25), the thorough knowledge and appreciation of God's creation necessary to man's adequate praise and thanksgiving for it. His explicit comments on natural philosophy and "Enjoyment of the World" are complemented by his use of imagery that reflects the contemporary interests of natural philosophers — infinity and space, astronomy, telescopy, microscopy, motion, light, colours, anatomy — and his celebration of the "Real Valuableness in all the Common Things" (C III.53) in both practical and metaphysical senses.

The thesis suggests, then, that Traherne's achievement in his writing, which is intellectually highly accomplished, seeks philosophical application to, and traces a conscious relation to, "the true Estate of this World", can be appreciated in terms of his stress on activity and practice in a real life; his intellectual ambition and search for knowledge; and his contemporary interest in natural philosophy.

The historical context is decisive. Traherne's life was lived

in real places and among real people, at a specific time: at Oxford in the 1650's, in London between 1669 and 1674. He sought "Knowledge" in terms recognised in his own time. Natural philosophy was a major contemporary interest: John Wilkins' experimental philosophy club met in Oxford in the 1650's and the Royal Society was founded and flourished in Restoration London. The unity of the texts — Traherne's writing — and contexts — his life and the historical circumstance from which the writing issues and to which it relates — is crucial.

Part One of the thesis examines this context. Traherne's life is outlined in close relation to the production of his writing. In particular, two periods are isolated for extended consideration: Oxford in the 1650's in Chapter Two, London from the late 1660's until 1674 in Chapter Four. It is assumed that, defined thus by specific and local time and place, everything that happened within these terms may be relevant to Traherne's life and work. More particular relevance is assessed by referring the context to Traherne's life and known associates (his patron Bridgeman is especially important here), or to the major surviving evidence of the texts themselves. As text and context are measured each against the other in this way a more thorough understanding of both, and of their interrelations, will become possible. Given this method, emphasis is placed on particular points where text and context coincide with unusual thoroughness: thus Chapter Five, effectively a continuation of the preceding chapter and very much a part of its attempt to portray the London known to Traherne, discusses the relation between Traherne's "Divine Philosophy" and the "Natural Philosophy" of members of the

Royal Society working in London while Traherne was resident there.

Part Two of the thesis comprises only one chapter. Here text and context merge still more closely. In the Early Notebook and Commonplace Book Traherne noted and reacted to contemporary or near-contemporary works — by Bacon, Gale or Barrow, for example — and works enjoying a high contemporary reputation — particularly Platonic and Hermetic writings. Some of the quotations copied into the notebooks found their way directly into Traherne's other writing: the quotations from the Hermetic Divine Pymander in Christian Ethicks, for example (CE 225 ff.). These quotations and their sources are discussed in relation to Traherne's writing as a whole in Chapter Six.

In the third and final part of the thesis, Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine conduct a reading of, respectively, the Select Meditations, Centuries of Meditations and Christian Ethicks. This "reading" is offered after the contextural analysis, with little direct reference to it. This apparent isolation — really an affirmation of the organic unity of text and context — is intended to preserve the self-sufficient integrity of the literary text, both as writing and as itself a real object. The text can be posed questions about itself, from within, and in this interrogation the reality of the text itself as a historical object becomes apparent. Finally, the contextural material is secondary to and subsumed within the primary authority and integrity of the text itself. The analysis can only be historical; the text comes from within history, is within history. The texts are presented here, then, for reading, a reading that should of necessity embrace at

least some of the material offered in the first two parts of the thesis. There "is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of Sense". The actual influence of "the motion of externall things" in the filling and fulfilling of "Empty Book" and "Infants Soul" is infinitely complex and highly elusive. Not to attempt to trace this is, however, either to adopt the critical presumption of "native Inscriptions" — the empty and inhuman triumph of anagogic and transhistorical abstraction — or to leave the "Cabinet" of the mind entirely unfurnished. "Things unknown have a Secret Influence on the Soul" (C I.2) and, "following the clew of Nature into this Labyrinth" (C III.70), a reading of text and context may suggest that while "evry Thing allures us" (C I.2) in its possible relation to Traherne, there are yet, within the "Labyrinth" itself, "Invisible Ways of Conveyance by which some Great Thing doth touch our Souls, and by which we tend to it" (C I.2). That "Great Thing" may yet be a thorough sense of the meaning of Traherne's life and work in relation to "the motion of externall things", in relation to "This Life" in "the true Estate of this World".

CHAPTER 2

Traherne and Oxford

1. Traherne at Oxford, 1653 - ?

Traherne was admitted to Brasenose College on 1 March $16\frac{52}{53}$ and matriculated on 2 April 1653. The College Register states that he was then fifteen years of age.[1] He graduated as a Bachelor of Arts on 13 October 1656 and then, according to Anthony Wood, "left the house for a time" and "entred into the sacred function".[2] This refers to his ordination and appointment as Rector of the village of Credenhill in Herefordshire in 1657. On 6 November 1661, however, Traherne became a Master of Arts and, although Wood says that he was "created master of arts" (my italics), the Decree permitting him to take the degree, passed at a meeting of Convocation on 12 September 1661, makes no reference to any failure on his part to fulfil conditions of residence or to complete required exercises. Margoliouth observes that "it is highly improbable that none of the required residence had been kept" (M I.xxxvi, note). So, despite his appointment as Rector of Credenhill in 1657, when he would seem to be rather young actually to assume such a position, it is possible that after graduating as a Bachelor of Arts Traherne left Oxford "for a time" as Wood says but then returned and remained there for an undefined period, perhaps until he received the degree of Master of Arts in 1661 or even later. He was in fact re-appointed to the Rectorship of Credenhill after the Restoration, in 1661. The first evidence of his actually being in residence at Credenhill, however, is his signature on transcripts of the parish registers for 1664.[3] Also in 1664 Brasenose College, then building a chapel, cloister and

library, acknowledged a gift of "viginti solidos" (£1) from "Thomas Traherne Rector de Credenhill".[4] By 1664, then, it can be assumed that Traherne was living at Credenhill, but as regards the years 1656-1664 there must remain considerable doubt.

The Early Notebook, which contains some of Traherne's undergraduate notes, cannot be attributed wholly to what may be called the proven period of residence in Oxford (1653-1656). Traherne was to receive the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in 1669, and he published Roman Forgeries in 1673. Some of the research for that book was done in the Bodleian Library (RF, "An Advertisement to the Reader") and Margoliouth observes that it has "a distinct smell of the thesis" (M I.xxxviii), suggesting that it represents, in part at least, work for which Traherne received his B.D. degree. Taking into account the fact that he received the degree of Master of Arts in 1661 and cannot be traced as resident at Credenhill until 1664, it may reasonably be assumed that Traherne continued his studies at Oxford for some time between 1656 and 1664. It might, for example, be proposed that he took the degree of B.A., a three year course (1653-1656), left Oxford "for a time" (say 1656-1657) and then returned to take the four year M.A. course (1657-1661), possibly even then remaining in Oxford to ~~de~~ do research for his B.D. degree and Roman Forgeries. This is conjecture. However, his M.A. and B.D. degrees, his gift to Brasenose and particularly his extended studies, some of which involved work in the Bodleian Library, may well indicate a connection with Oxford continued at least beyond the three years' residence required for the B.A. degree.

The dates of Traherne's matriculation and graduation constitute virtually all the extant information relating to his career at

Oxford. The Brasenose College Register records that his status was that of a Commoner, and Margoliouth has traced some scattered references in the now incomplete series of the Brasenose Buttery Books (M I.xxiv). In Roman Forgeries Traherne includes a brief incidental reminiscence from his days at Oxford. He tells how, "One evening", as he "came out of the Bodleian Library, which is the Glory of Oxford, and this Nation" he was introduced to "a Grave Person . . . a man that had spent many thousand pounds in promoting Popery": "The Gentleman came up to us of his own accord. We agreed, for the greater liberty and privacy, to walk abroad into the New-Parks". Traherne offered to meet this "Grave Person" outside the Bodleian on the next day and to take him into the library and demonstrate to him that the works he accepts as "good Records" of the Roman Catholic religion are "down right frauds and forgeries". He refused to come, saying that it did not matter to the Church of Rome if the records were forgeries. Traherne was outraged: "I turned from him as an obdurate person" (RF, "An Advertisement to the Reader"). This passage has little other than anecdotal value (although, if Traherne was not at Oxford after 1656, it might suggest a certain precosity in a scholar of nineteen) but, as can be seen from passages in Traherne's later writings, his career at Oxford was important to him. Roman Forgeries itself has been seen as evidence for "the intellectual quality . . . of Traherne".[5] It is in part through Traherne's Oxford education that something of this "intellectual quality" may be appreciated.

The most significant contemporary source for information about Traherne's career at Oxford is his own Early Notebook. Margoliouth called this "Philip Traherne's Notebook", although he recognised

that most of the writing was that of Thomas (M I.xx-xxii). He did not however identify the source of the major section (EN 69-170) of "Miscellaneous quoatations, notes, etc., by Thomas" (M I.xx). Carol Marks has suggested the new title for the manuscript, and claims that rather more of the notes are by Thomas, although acknowledging that the notebook originally belonged to Philip.[6] There seems no reason to doubt her conclusion that Philip's entries end on Page Five. After a clear break at that point changes in the handwriting, one of which is an important clue to the dating of the manuscript, can be accounted for by the long period of time during which Traherne seems to have used the notebook. There are 394 pages (numbered i-vi and 1-388), Page iii bearing Philip Traherne's claim to ownership: "Philip Traherne is the true owner of this booke Amen Anno Domini 1655". Thomas Traherne's notes begin on Page 7, and there are two main groups of notes in the manuscript. Firstly, those between Pages 7 and 55, which date from circa 1655-1656, and secondly those between Pages 69 and 170 which are of uncertain date but probably immediately followed the first group and extended over several years. Miscellaneous entries were made in the notebook until the early 1660's. In the first group of notes Traherne uses a secretary "r", but in the second both secretary and italic "r" occur concurrently. In all later manuscripts Traherne was to use italic "r" exclusively.[7] It seems then that Traherne made use of the Early Notebook as an undergraduate at Oxford between 1655 and 1656, having acquired it from his brother who had claimed it as his in 1655, and then continued to use it after his graduation as a Bachelor of Arts, probably with decreasing frequency until the last entries were made in the early 1660's.

The first significant notes in the Early Notebook, dating probably from 1655-1656, are recognisable as part of Traherne's undergraduate work. The writing is neat and careful, and Latin the language throughout. The notes are of limited intrinsic interest, partly because of their brevity, but do provide a glimpse of some of the material Traherne studied at Oxford. Page 7 bears the title "Totius Moralis Philosophiae Perfecta Epitome et concisa per Quaestiones et responsiones Tradita". The notes in this section extend to Page 21. They follow the Ethica of Eustachius (Eustache de Saint Paul, 1573-1640), the first English edition of which was published in Cambridge in 1654. The notes are organised in question and answer form, some of the answers being taken from other unidentified sources. Traherne studied what was, in an English edition at least, a recent book, one which maintained some currency throughout the seventeenth century — in 1661 a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, Isaac Newton, included among his notes some "Annotationes ex Eustachii Ethic.".[8] Eustachius was "a true scholastic" (CE xxi) and Traherne's epitome reflects a "simplified Aristotelianism of the kind purveyed in elementary textbooks" (CE xxi). The main aim of these brief notes seems to have been to provide an abstract of basic traditional ethical thought at undergraduate level. The notes themselves indicate little positive response to Eustachius' text. Traherne was later to remark that he had no wish to "treat of Vertues in the ordinary way" (CE 3).

On Page 22 of the Early Notebook begins Traherne's "Epitome Geometria", which runs to Page 32. This follows a textbook on geometry, probably that of Ramus (Pierre de La Ramee, 1515-1572) first published in 1569. The statutes of Oxford would require

that Traherne attend the geometry lectures of the Savilian Professor, John Wallis. Wallis' Mathesis Universalis, published in 1657 and said to derive in part from his lectures, adopts a more modern approach than Ramus' ninety year old work, but this may still have been considered adequate for undergraduate use. The notes again seem to fulfil a basic educational requirement. Eight pages of historical notes complete this first section of the Early Notebook and also have a somewhat perfunctory aspect. These are from Justin's third century epitome of the Historiae Philippicae et Totius Mundi Origines et Terrae Situs by Pompeius Trogus (fl. c.10 B.C.), a historical text used throughout the middle ages and still regarded in the 1650's as a convenient if not entirely accurate text of classical history.

The first section of notes in the Early Notebook, then, can be dated circa 1655-1656 and probably constitute part of Traherne's undergraduate notes on ethics, geometry and history. A consideration of aspects of Oxford education at this time will attempt to provide a perspective for this part of Traherne's experience. Firstly, however, an examination of the Early Notebook may conclude with an account of the longest and most interesting section. The undergraduate notes are followed by several blank pages (EN 56-68). Then begins a series of more than 100 pages (EN 69-170), including some blank pages, of closely written notes in Latin. Page 71 bears the title of this section:

Flores Elegantissimae
D. Franc: Baconis
De Verulamio
Ex Lib: De Augmentis Scientiarum
Excerptae.

Just before and/or soon after taking his B.A. degree, and for some

time following, Traherne copied into the Early Notebook an extensive selection of quotations, the large majority from Francis Bacon's De Augmentis Scientiarum (1623). There are scattered short references to some other works by Bacon — to the Essays, for example. The De Augmentis, a much enlarged version of the Advancement of Learning (1605), was intended by Bacon to constitute the survey of existing knowledge that was to be included in his "Great Instauration", the renovation and reconstruction of all learning and science that was to supercede the work of Aristotle, to whom scholastic traditions traced their ancestry. There are nine books to the De Augmentis. Book One is an almost direct Latin translation of Book One of the Advancement of Learning, while Books Two to Nine represent a greatly expanded version of the remainder of that work. Traherne's notes concentrate on Book One, which deals with current "vanities" of learning (notably those of the scholastic traditions) and, to a lesser extent, on Books Two to Three. Notes from the other books are more sparing and, in the case of Books Seven and Eight, non-existent.[9] There are two prominent groups of blank pages in this part of the manuscript (EN 77-85, 104-113), but in view of the sections of Bacon's text that these would account for there is a case for assuming that Traherne intended to return to these later.[10]

"Flores Elegantissimae" is a neat characterisation of the notes, and might incidentally be seen, together with the carefully designed title page itself, to indicate on Traherne's part a more appreciative attitude to Bacon, to whose work he devotes 100 pages of the notebook, than to those works from which he extracted the concise "epitomes" (EN 7, 22) that occupy the earlier 50 pages.

Traherne copied the mainly brief extracts from Bacon's work straightforwardly and, as it were, aphoristically, seeking to encapsulate in a short phrase something of what he perhaps perceived as Bacon's moral wisdom. For example:

> of Time
> Tempus simile est Fluvio, qui in levia et inflata ad nos evehit; solida autem et pondus habentia submergit.
> (EN 101; WFB I.460).

> Humility in learning a pretious Jewell.
> I hold that of L. Bacon a solid Resolution:
> Equidem libenter aeque acceperim, ab alijs, ac ipse impertiverim.
> (EN 118; WFB I.492).

Interesting considerations in relation to his later works are raised by the fact of Traherne's having read De Augmentis, and a more speculative discussion is attempted elsewhere (see Chapter 6 below). Here the concern is more immediately with Traherne's experience at Oxford.

2. Oxford education in the 1650's

Oxford had played a prominent part in the upheavals of the 1640's and remained something of a Royalist stronghold during the Civil Wars. Puritan scholars, seen by some modern historians as of special significance in any consideration of interregnum education, tended to be attracted to Cambridge. After Oxford had surrendered to Parliament on 24 June 1646, however, Oxford itself needed to attract scholars, often the earlier disaffected Puritans, to fill the places made vacant by 370 ejections from senior positions. The Cromwellian visitation of 1648 effected a considerable but not a thorough change of personnel, while formal academic pursuits, and especially undergraduate teaching, retained

a traditional character. Normal functioning was largely restored by 1649. The notes of Traherne's contemporaries at Oxford differ little from those of students of the preceding decades. Scholastic texts and commentaries on Aristotle and Aquinas continued to feature in the curriculum: the notes of Benjamin Gostlette and Henry Parker at Christ Church evince a typical Aristotelian emphasis, while Aquinas and the scholastic Fonseca and Suarez figure in the notes of Nicholas Floyd at Wadham and John Hearne at Exeter College.[11] Hearne matriculated in 1653, so was an exact contemporary of Traherne at Oxford. His notes record his study of Christoph Scheibler's Metaphysica, a work edited in 1637 by Thomas Barlow, Bodley's Librarian (1652-1660) and Provost of Queen's College from 1657. Scheibler's Metaphysica is included among the works recommended by "an English Scholar-Priest" working in Oxford in about 1655 as necessary to a form a "library for younger schollers".[12] The "Scholar-Priest" may well have been Thomas Barlow.[13] At some time during his acquaintance with Oxford Traherne was to know Barlow personally. He tells in Roman Forgeries how he found copies of a rare book containing work attributed to Isidore of Sevile: "The Booksellers'-Shops afforded me none: but at last I met with two of them; the one with the Learned Dr. Barlow, Margaret Professor, and Provost of Queen's Colledge, the other in the Bodleian Library" (RF 90).[14] Barlow did not become Lady Margaret Professor until 1660 so, although this anecdote cannot be dated precisely, it would seem to suggest that Traherne at least visited Oxford after 1660.

Barlow's design for the library is "almost exclusively . . . in the old style",[15] but it is representative of attitudes to education

that retained formal approval in Oxford at this time. It is from within the traditions embodied in Barlow's library that Traherne would have received his formal education, and his extant notes on ethics, geometry and history in the first section of the Early Notebook show his acquaintance with the methods and material suggested by Barlow. "Ethicks, or Morall Philosophie", "Mathematicks" and "Historians", as in Traherne's notes, are three of the main headings under which books are recommended. These should be complemented, Barlow suggests, by study of "Logique", "Physicks, or Natural Philosophie (after Aristotle)", "Metaphysicks" and "Chronologie", and of "Oratores" and "Poets". "Divinity" is reserved for a long and separate section. Typically, Aristotle is assumed to have formulated the basis for all secular knowledge. Barlow would teach "Logique", for example, through commentaries on Aristotle's Organon by Rubius or Smiglecius, or through works by Scheibler or Zabarella.[16] "Physicks, or Natural Philosophy" should be studied in terms defined "(after Aristotle)": Barlow recommends works by Duns Scotus, Pererius and Rubius.[17]

In the early 1660's Traherne, looking back to his education at Oxford, remarked that in "the scholes" he had "heard them dispute De ente De forma materiali, D[e] Quid-ditate, and such like Drie and Empty Theames" (SM III.30). At Cambridge in the 1620's John Milton had already expressed dissatisfaction with the emphasis on scholastic pursuits,[18] and in the attack on the "contentious learning" of scholastic philosophy in Bacon's De Augmentis, read by Traherne in the 1650's, the "laborious webs of learning" of the Schoolmen were seen to be spun out in monastic isolation from experience and knowledge of history or nature under the dominant

influence of "Aristotle their dictator" (WFB III.285-86). There is evidence for a tendency among certain commentators in the 1650's to regard the traditions of scholastic education and disputation, such as those embodied in Barlow's recommendations, as no more than "Drie and Empty Theames". While the traditions of the Schoolmen continued within formal education Bacon's suggestion that "the contemplation of the creatures of God" (WFB III.286) might more profitably occupy scholars was taken up by men who identified Bacon and his "Great Instauration" as a model for the establishment of a knowledge (or "science", perhaps, in the sense of the German "Wissenschaft") based on experience, on direct observation and/or practical application and experiment. Traditional learning maintained that the works of Aristotle held the key to all understanding, the summation of which might one day be achieved as commentary followed commentary. A seventeenth century scholar like Barlow would consult Aristotle or a relevant commentary on any question, seeking the ideas and opinions of his "authorities". The Baconian would seek his own answers by actual observation and experiment, through immediate experience of the world, pursuing what Bacon called the "severe inquisition" of the natural philosopher into nature and the whole of creation (WFB III.284). Traherne was later to recommend to all men, each of whom he saw as an "Heir of the World" (C I.3), the "Diligent Inquisition into all Natures" (C III.44) that "Natural Philosophy" (C III.44) involves: "it openeth the Riches of God's kingdom and the Natures of His Territories Works and Creatures in a Wonderfull Maner" (C III.44). Man's experience and knowledge of nature also issues in what Traherne was to call "Uses" and "Services" (e.g. CE 182) which function in

practical as well as metaphysical senses. There is a "utilitarian emphasis, transfigured yet discernable in [Traherne's] doctrine of felicity".[19]

William Petty, who became a Fellow of Traherne's future college, Brasenose, in 1648 and Professor of Anatomy in 1651,[20] had focussed the practical Baconian attitude as it might be relevant to general education, showing that its usefulness was not limited to the more "scientific" aspects of natural philosophy:

> We wish . . . that the educandi be taught to observe and remember all sensible objects and actions, whether they be natural or artificial, which the educators must on all occasions expound unto them . . . as it would be more profitable to boys to spend ten or twelve years in the study of things than in a rabble of words. . . . There would not then be so many unworthy fustian preachers in divinity; in the law so many pettyfoggers; in physics so many quacksalvers; and in the country schools so many grammaticasters.[21]

Petty's contrast between the "study of things" and "a rabble of words" repeats Bacon's emphasis on "the contemplation of the creatures of God" as an alternative to the Schoolmen's "laborious webs of learning". Traherne's reservations about the "Drie and Empty Theames" of the university disputations he heard in the 1650's might similarly be contrasted with his insistence on the importance of "the contemplation of GODS Works, wherin all the Riches of His Kingdom will appear" (C II.3). Elsewhere, however, he was to remark that, having received a "Bad Education" at school (C III.7), he went to University and "received there the Taste and Tincture of another Education, I saw that there were Things in the World of which I never Dreamed, Glorious Secrets . . . There I saw that Logick, Ethicks, Physicks, Metaphysicks,

Geometry, Astronomy, Poesie, Medicine, Grammer, Musick, Rhetoric, all kind of Arts Trades and Mechanismes that Adorned the World pertained to felicity" (C III.36). While the particular notice here of "Arts Trades and Mechanismes" itself suggests a Baconian rather than a scholastic emphasis — traditional scholars scorned contact with applied science while Bacon found in craftsmanship, for example, an alternative model of human practice and inquiry — Traherne's assertion that "Natural Philosophy" itself is "Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends" (C III.44) may be significant in the light of his suggestion that at Oxford he "received . . . the Taste and Tincture of another Education".

It was pre-eminently "Natural Philosophy" that represented the Baconian approach to learning. Oxford in the 1650's was at the centre of an educational controversy which may be focussed in terms of the study of forms of natural philosophy within the curriculum. Barlow in his suggestions for a library for "younger schollers" reveals a limited awareness of contemporary trends. For him "Physicks, or Naturall Philosophy" can be studied in a tradition "(after Aristotle)", but he does suggest that to the authorities he quotes from within this tradition "You may adde" works by Gassendi, Bacon, Descartes and Kenelm Digby.[22] Gassendi, as well as Bacon, had explicitly attacked the Aristotelian traditions that are otherwise central to Barlow's proposals. This may suggest an awareness on Barlow's part both of the continuing development of natural philosophy outside and beyond the fundamental Aristotelian tradition and of contemporary pressure for the inclusion of these developed notions within the curriculum.

Oxford was subject to such pressure. In 1653 John Webster published his Academiarum Examen in which he suggests that the "learning of Copernicus, Ticho Brahe, Galilaeus, Ballialdus, and such like, might be introduced" to the university curriculum "and the rotten and ruinous Fabrick of Aristotle and Ptolemy rejected and laid aside" (AE 103). He considers it scandalous that Ptolemaic theories should be taught more than a century after Copernicus' De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium (1543), and that the university should apparently ignore the modern work of the mathematicians Briggs, Napier and Oughtred. His suggestion for alternative material to replace the works of Aristotle and subsequent traditions, are interesting. He would like to see more attention given to the work of Plato (via Ficino) and of Parmenides and Empedocles, to the theories of the Greek atomists Democritus and Epicurus as rendered by Descartes and Gassendi, to Gilbert's "Magnetical Philosophy" and to the Hermetic writings. Bacon is Webster's main influence and example: he refers to Bacon more often than to any other author. He advocates inductive reasoning as opposed to deductive logic, and seeks the establishment of a new "science", a new form of and attitude to knowledge, based on practical observation and experiment rather than theoretical textual authority and exegesis. He advocates study of nature and the world "whereby the wonderful works of the Creator are discovered and innumerable benefits produced to the poor creatures" (AE 69). Traherne's later sympathy with this form of "Natural Philosophy", including a "utilitarian" emphasis, has been demonstrated here. Early in the 1660's he was to observe that "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's

kingdom" (SM III.53) and that "the fabrick of the world and the uses of [God's] creatures are . . . contemplated that we may know the Glory of Him that loveth us" (SM II.88). Traherne had by then been reading Bacon, and by the time of his period as Chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman in London (1669-1674) he was to demonstrate his acquaintance with many of the works and authors John Webster had recommended in the 1650's, including Copernicus, Brahe and Galileo (CB 18^{v}), Plato (FN, passim.), Democritus and Epicurus (CB 18^{v}), Gilbert (CB 39^{r}; C I.2) and "Hermes Trismegistus" (CE 224-37). As Traherne was to remark in the Centuries he may have received at Oxford "Seeds of knowledge that were afterwards improved" (C III.37).

Modern historians have traced relationships between desire for educational reform in the interregnum and radical political/religious ideas, stressing a Puritan influence and emphasis on the practical aspects of the Baconian "Great Instauration".[23] One historian has seen a high mark of agitation for reform in the universities in about 1653, the year of both the publication of Academiarum Examen and Traherne's matriculation at Brasenose.[24] There is little opportunity to enter this debate here. Webster can however be identified as having had connections with several groups of interregnum radicals. At various times in his earlier life he had been associated with Seekers and Ranters, had served as a Chaplain in the New Model Army, and, as a Curate in Yorkshire, had been in conflict with the Church over his association with the Grindletonians.[25] Educational reform at this time implied more than disillusion with scholastic traditions. Hobbes in Leviathan (1651) recognised the importance of the universities as influential

ideological centres: "the Universities are the Fountains of Civill, and Morall Doctrine, from whence the Preachers, and the Gentry, drawing such water as they find, use to sprinkle the same (both from the Pulpit, and in their Conversation) upon the People".[26] Thus, for Hobbes and reformers like Webster, the importance of ensuring that the "water" is pure, according at least to their individual notions of such purity. In the contemporary Early Notebook Traherne uses the same image in a comparable recognition:

> our Universities by a Metaphore are called Fountaines, from whence the various streams and rivers of al learnings & liberal proffessions flow and are nourished; which were these wanting would soon decay & waxe drie as a deceitfull brook. (EN 115).

It was largely in these terms that John Wilkins and Seth Ward replied to John Webster in Vindiciae Academiarum (1654).

Wilkins wrote only the Preface. In the main text of the book, Ward questions Webster's insistence on the central importance of natural philosophy to education. This, he says, does not adequately represent the purpose of university education. The "Nobility or Gentry" who send their sons to university do not want them to be "set to Chymistry, or Agriculture, or Mechanicks" but simply to become "Rationall and Graceful speakers, and be of an acceptable behaviour" (VA 50). Study of natural philosophy should not be a single aim, but Ward admits that it is important. It should be remembered, he says, that not everyone wants to be "absolute in Naturall Philosophy" (VA 50). Indeed, "there is not one of many hundreds" who wishes to be so, although "such as will, ought certainly to follow this course" (VA 50). Compromise is the

fundamental impulse behind Ward's vindication of Oxford education. He admits to thinking "Aristotle's Books, the best of any Philosophick writings" (VA 45-46) but Wilkins claims in the Preface that

> though we do very much honour Aristotle for his profound judgement and universall learning, yet we are so farre from being tyed up in his opinions, that persons of all conditions amongst us take liberty to declare against him, according as any contrary evidence doth ingage them, being ready to follow the Banner of truth by whomsoever it shall be lifted up. (VA Preface).

Vindiciae Academiarum suggests that, while Webster's system of education is not, and need not be, followed at Oxford, elements from within that system might be studied, if desired, within a liberal interpretation of the formal curriculum. Thus there "is not to be wished a more general liberty in point of judgement or debate, then what is here allowed", for "there is scarce any Hypothesis . . . but hath here its strenuous Assertours, as the Atomicall and Magneticall in Philosophy, the Copernican in Astronomy etc." (VA Preface). The Copernican system is taught "as improved by Kepler, Bullialdus [and] our own Professor" (VA 29; "our own Professor" is Ward himself). In optics "such things are ordinary now among us . . . as heretofore were counted Magicall" (VA 29). Many modern scientific instruments are used. More important to Ward than these particular features is the liberality of Oxford and the wide variety of education and attitudes that can be made freely available as required:

> our Academies are of a more generall and comprehensive institution, and as there is a provision here made, that whosoever will be excellent in any kind in any Art,

> Science, or Language, may here receive assistance and be led by the hand, till he come to be excellent; so is there a provision likewise, that men be not forced into particular waies, but may receive an institution answerable to their genius and designe.

Whatever weight is given to Vindiciae Academiarum and its claims in an assessment of education at Oxford in the 1650's it is important here as an internal view of the education that was supposedly available to Traherne — Wilkins was Warden of Wadham and Ward Professor of Anatomy. There is a Baconian emphasis in Vindiciae Academiarum, as well as in Academiarum Examen, but it is a theoretical rather than a practical one. Ward perhaps disliked the practical implications — Webster is attacked in Vindiciae Academiarum as "an absolute Leveller" (see VA 20,51, 68-70,106-08). For Ward, as for Webster, however, the end of certain aspects of education is that, in a theological as well as a natural sense, "the way of nature in workeing may be discovered".[28]

Ward's thorough insistence on the liberality of Oxford education does suggest that Barlow's Library, for example, does not provide an entirely representative impression of Traherne's education. A modern historian has remarked that at this time "one finds countless examples of changeless forms and regulations, and transformed subject matter. The arts curriculum, although it might look like a rigid . . . course . . . had greater flexibility in content than its format might suggest".[29] The curriculum itself inherited something of the medieval form: the study of the Trivium (grammar, logic and rhetoric) for the three-year B.A. degree and the study of the Quadrivium (the mathematical

sciences — arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) for the four-year M.A.. If a liberal interpretation of the curriculum, already expanded and freed from the stricter medieval definitions, could be accepted the possibility that attention could be given to contemporary natural philosophy clearly occured more readily within the M.A. course. This has been seen as a possible explanation for the preponderence of traditional subjects and works studied by undergraduates in the 1650's.[30] Boys, often in their mid-teens, had first to complete the B.A. course along traditional lines. They could then either regard their education as complete, their "reason, Fancy and carriage" improved as Ward suggests, or proceed to the Inns of Court. Some might stay at Oxford to take the M.A. degree, but evidence suggests that between sixty and eighty per cent did not do this. For those who did remain "an interest in science was strongly correlated with completing the M.A. course", for it was then that, having completed a basic formal education, students were allowed more freedom to pursue the often more modern studies of their choice.[31] In this respect it is interesting that Barlow's library was intended specifically for "younger schollers" (my italics). It would be possible to apply this outline of education to Traherne, for he did receive the degree of M.A., and there is no evidence to suggest that he did not fulfil appropriate conditions of study. Certainly, he followed an extensive course of personal study throughout his life, one which ranged from a thorough knowledge of a representative proportion of classical authors to acquaintance with contemporary scientific theories and works by Bacon and Boyle, for example. At Oxford in the 1650's and in the Bodleian Library, "the Glory of Oxford, and this Nation" (RF, "An Advertisement to

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the Reader"), he had perhaps the best opportunity to fulfil his avid intellectual ambitions and his "Curiositie Profound and Unsatiable" (C III.42). Whether Traherne can be more particularly associated with the radical suggestions of John Webster, or sought only to "receive an institution, variously answerable to [his] genius and designe" (VA 50) within the terms of Ward's response to these, there remains the evidence of his thorough contemporary study of Bacon's De Augmentis, the "Seeds of Knowledg that were afterwards improved" (C III.37), often along the lines suggested by Webster, and his own "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) of the understanding, appreciation and use of nature to suggest that Traherne was at least in sympathy with if not directly aware of dominant aspects of educational theory and debate. "Although the arts curriculum retained its scholastic bias, many tutors and students explored new pathways of knowledge . . . evidence points to the steady infiltration of new ideas into higher education".[32] Perhaps, looking back to his experience at Oxford in the 1650's Traherne was indeed justified in saying that he "received there the Taste and Tincture of another Education" (C III.36).

3. John Wilkins' "experimentall philosophicall clubbe".

"Nevertheless", Traherne says, at Oxford, "som things were Defectiv too. There never was a Tutor that did professly Teach Felicity: tho that be the Mistress of all other Sciences. Nor did any of us Study these things but as Aliena, which we ought to hav Studied as our own Enjoyments" (C III.37). "Felicity" for Traherne is to be ~~acheived~~ achieved through understanding and appreciation, thorough "Enjoyment", of God's creation. "Natural Philosophy", as it is

"Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends" (C III.44) helps man to achieve "Felicity" and the "God-like" knowledge of creation necessary to it. So, "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's kingdom" (SM III.53) and "all the things in Heaven and Earth are Infinit Treasures: And are never Enjoyed but when truly seen" (SM III.6). "Felicity" and "Enjoyment" were lacking as formal pursuits at Oxford: as "Sciences" their matter and methods, the "contemplation of GODS Works" (C II.3), had to be studied, if at all, as "Aliena".

Debate about and interest in natural philosophy was not confined, at Oxford in the 1650's, to criticism or vindication of the academic curriculum. It is evident when informal pursuits are considered that this was "a period when Oxford was rapidly becoming a center for the new science".[33] John Wilkins (1614-1672) and Seth Ward (1617-1689), as well as holding major academic apoointments, belonged to a group of men, centred on Wilkins himself, who were interested and actively engaged in natural philosophy and its practice. William Petty (1623-1687) of Brasenose College also belonged to this group, as did Jonathan Goddard (1617?-1675; Warden of Merton College) and John Wallis (1616-1703; Savilian Professor of Astronomy; Exeter College). All these men had been appointed by Cromwell's visitors in 1648. In 1654, at the invitation of Wilkins, Robert Boyle (1627-1691) came independently to Oxford and was soon to establish a laboratory there. Wilkins became "a principal reviver of experimental philosophy . . . at Oxford, where he had a weekely experimentall philosophicall clubbe, which began 1649".[34] Other identified members of this club were to include Ralph Bathurst, Joseph Glanvill, Richard Lower, John

Mayow, Henry Oldenburg, Walter Pope, Joseph Williamson, Thomas Willis and the brothers Christopher and Matthew Wren. Robert Hooke (1635-1703), who matriculated as a member of Christ Church in 1652 and so was a contemporary of Traherne as a student at Oxford, assisted Boyle in his laboratory. Another contemporary student, Thomas Sprat (matriculated at Wadham, 1651) later recalled the activity of this period in his History of the Royal Society (1667), and John Locke (matriculated at Christ Church, 1652) was also associated with Wilkins' club.

A tentative list of members of Wilkins' club has been established.[35] There is little doubt that this is incomplete. Wallis, for example, mentioned besides the central members "many others of the most inquisitive persons in Oxford" and both he and Ward allude to "divers" now anonymous people who were either members or showed an interest in the activities of the club. Wilkins and his acquaintances "found numerous scholars receptive to their ideas".[36] The presence of the "Inquisitive" (C III.15) Traherne in Oxford at this time may be noted. The membership, influence and popular reputation of Wilkins' club is difficult to determine, but there is no evidence to suggest that Traherne, as an Oxford student, could not be associated with or at least aware of the club and its activities, if only by contemporary local publications by its members and the fact that Wilkins and several of his closest associates were prominent Oxford academics. It is the purpose of the ensuing study not necessarily to suggest such an association on Traherne's part (although this may remain an attractive possibility) but to trace a significant aspect of the cultural and intellectual life of the Oxford inhabited by Traherne

and to examine certain features of Traherne's writing and thought which suggest a positive, if presumably indirect, relation to this. This relation may be manifest in certain particular instances but is more pervasive in terms of general philosophical ideas about nature and its significance as an object for man's understanding and appreciation.

Wilkins had been the focus of a similar "experimentall philosophicall clubbe" in London since about 1645. When he and his associates moved to Oxford in the late 1640's it seems that they joined a similar group already in existence there, probably centred on William Harvey (1578-1657; Warden of Merton College until 1648) with Bathurst, Willis, Walter Charleton and possibly John Aubrey and Abraham Cowley among its members. The first English edition of Harvey's Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis appeared in 1649 (as Exercitatio Anatomica de Circulatione Sanguinis) and his Exercitationes de Generatione Animalium was first published in 1651. His work, like that of William Gilbert whose De Magnete had appeared in 1600, was recognised by contemporary natural philosophers as among the most significant and stimulating of modern scientific efforts. Both retain a high reputation today. With regard to Wilkins' "experimentall philosophicall clubbe" of the 1650's, however, it "would be wrong to believe that the whole group was enlivened by a superior 'modern' scientific methodology and engaged upon rigorous experimental studies comparable with the highest achievements of individual members".[37] It is true, though, that the Oxford club "gives an impression of wide ranging curiosity. This was undoubtedly encouraged by Wilkins 'secundum mentem

domini Baconi'".[38] That Bacon should be seen as the acknowledged "master" of these natural philosophers provides the basis for a confirmed recognition of Traherne's shared contemporary interests in his reading of De Augmentis. His awareness of his own "Curiositie Profound and Unsatiable" (C III.42) and the later realisation of his "Capacity" in this sense also suggest a certain intellectual sympathy. This can be further traced in the Commonplace Book (CB 39^{r}), which demonstrates Traherne's acquaintance with the work of Galileo, Brahe and Maestlin, and of Copernicus and Kepler, on whose theories Seth Ward, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford when Traherne was resident there, based his work in his De Cometis (1653) and Astronomia Geometrica (1656).

Ward's first efforts as Professor had been "to bring the Astronomy Lectures into Reputation",[40] and to establish "a Magneticall, Mechanicall and Optick Schoole furnished with the best instruments, and Adapted for the most useful experiments" (VA 36). The telescope and particularly the microscope were instruments closely and popularly associated with the "virtuosi" of the seventeenth century.

[Pages 57-58 are cancelled: the text continues on Page 59]

~~Elements and Terrestrial Creatures is matter of Sence and Reason" (OE 112).~~

~~Parallel to the use and development of the telescope was that of the microscope, an instrument closely and popularly associated with the "virtuosi" of the seventeenth century. "Microscopy became a preoccupation with the Baconians."~~ The microscope was a valuable instrument, but it also provided them with considerable entertainment. Their use of it was at once a means of attracting publicity, and an object of satire".[41] This element of entertainment and popularity should not be forgotten in any consideration of likely awareness of Wilkin's club at Oxford in the 1650's. Robert Hooke, who worked as a student in Boyle's laboratory there, did not publish his treatise on microscopy, Micrographia, until 1665. It seems however that some of the preparation for Micrographia was done at Oxford in the preceding decade, and that some of the elaborate drawings used in the first edition were also prepared there, possibly by Christopher Wren. "How Rich and Admirable then is the Kingdom of God; where the Smallest is Greater than an infinite Treasure!" (C III.20), Traherne later exclaimed: "we may see a little Heaven in the Creatures" (C II.12). As Hooke observed, "in every little particle . . . we may now behold almost as great a variety of Creatures as we were able before to reckon up in the whole Universe it self".[42]

If the microscope was a source of publicity for the natural philosophers, the continued popularisation promoted by this could not rival in immediate effect the publicity resulting from a single event in Oxford in 1650. William Petty and a local doctor, Thomas Willis, received for dissection the body of Ann Green, a hanged

criminal. By chance, some life remained in the body, and Petty and Willis were able to revive her. The publication of an account of the event in 1651, however, demonstrated a current belief that the two anatomists had in fact brought Ann Green back to life when she had been dead.[43] The natural philosophers of Wilkins' club, and of the university itself, could hardly have desired a more dramatic advertisement of their anatomical skills and interests. Petty had probably left Brasenose College by 1653, when Traherne became a member. The interest in and awareness of the physical body, newly appreciated and understood by the less dramatic practices of contemporary natural philosophers is however present in Traherne's detailed admiration of "organized Joints and azure Veins" ("The Salutation", M II.4-5, l.23) and his wonder at

> These little Limbs,
> These Eys and Hands which here I find,
> This panting Heart wherewith my Life begins.
>
> ("The Salutation", M II.45, ll.1-3).

In the Thanksgivings, and notably the Thanksgivings for the Body (M II.214-229), he celebrates the "Real Valuableness in all the Common Things" (C III.53), in "Air, Light, Heaven and Earth, Water, the Sun, Trees, Men and Women" (C III.53), in the anatomical perfection of the human form and the physical perfection of the whole of creation.

The "Real Valuableness" of "Air" (C III.53) was, if more literally, one of Boyle's major interests at this time. The "machina Boyleana" or "pnuematical engine", developed in the laboratory at Oxford with the aid of Robert Hooke, enabled Boyle to conduct experiments involving and inquiring into the qualities of air, assessing its weight, and what he called its compressability,

elasticity and "spring". The results of these experiments were published in New Experiments Physico-Mechanical Touching the Spring of Air and its Effects (1660). Traherne shows in his later writing a developed awareness of the air as of many physical phenomena: "the Air it self" is "a WORK so Divine by reason of its Precious and Pure Transparency, that all Worlds would be Nothing without such a Treasure" (C I.34). Indeed, "all the things in Heaven and Earth are Infinit Treasures: And are never Enjoyed but when truly seen" (SM III.6). If "Natural Philosophy" is "Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends" (C III.44) does it contribute directly and recognisably, in Traherne's view, to the "true seeing" of "all the things in Heaven and Earth" and thus to the "Enjoyment" that is part of "Felicity"? "Felicity" and "Enjoyments" could only be studied as "Aliena" (C III.37) at Oxford in the 1650's. The informal activity of Wilkins' club shows that a large group of natural philosophers pursued their own studies, despite some connection with formal teaching, largely as "Aliena". Can Traherne's notion of Felicity, and his own "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3), already evolving in the Select Meditations of the early 1660's, have any real contact with, or truly share motivation with, the "Natural Philosophy" of the Oxford scientists?

4. The "theological use of natural philosophy".

A religious aspect was essential to contemporary natural philosophy. As central figures in Wilkins' club achieved high positions as Oxford academics, so did they gain ecclesiastical preferment. Seth Ward was to become Bishop of Exeter in 1662 and Bishop of Salisbury in 1667; John Wilkins became Bishop of Chester

in 1668. Ward and John Wallis were admitted to the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1654. Many of the known members of the Oxford club had some connection with the Church or a special interest in religion. The preferments gained by some were not necessarily mere formalities or token ~~recognotion~~ recognition for their learning. Many had a genuine impulse, like Seth Ward, "to cleer to himself, who is a lover of rationall knowledge, an account of his own belief".[44] The religious impulse could take on the aspect not only of justification but of initial motivation for natural philosophical pursuits.

Robert Boyle's activities as a theologian as well as a scientist were extensive. He was a prolific author and promoter of religious works and biblical translations — he himself learned Greek, Hebrew, Syriac and Chaldee so as to be able to read original scriptures. On his death he established a series of sermons intended to explain the relevance of natural philosophy to religion, for he believed that these were complementary studies. As a young man at Stalbridge, before moving to Oxford (he was 27 in 1654) Boyle's principal interest had been the study of theology and the regulated daily practice of a religious life. His scientific studies came second to this. In 1649 he had written to his sister about a book he was planning, in which he would explain "the theological use of natural philosophy, endeavouring to make the contemplation of the creatures contributory to the instruction of the prince, and to the glory of the author of them".[45] He says of his scientific work that

> Vulcan has so transported and bewitched me,
> that as the delights I taste in it make me
> fancy my laboratory a kind of Elysium so as
> if the threshold of it possessed the
> qualities the poets ascribed to that Lethe,

> their fictions made men taste of before
> their entrance into those seats of bliss.[46]

Such statements are representative of contemporary articulations of the "theological use of natural philosophy", both in style and content. Imaginative hyperbole was a common means of expression — certainly there was little of Sprat's "mathematical plainness" (HRS 113), itself somewhat mythical. If philosophers looked to Bacon for guidance, it would now be wrong to see either his work or theirs as rigorously scientific after more modern patterns. Many of the natural philosophers working in Oxford in the 1650's were to become members of the Royal Society, but the reputation of the Society in its early days has been falsely coloured by the most lasting achievements of its more remarkable members. Its foundation does not represent what has sometimes been regarded as the initiation of a positivist progress towards complete scientific truth. Beside the work of Wallis and Boyle must be set the unrecorded attempts of a largely anonymous body of Oxford scholars and enthusiastic "virtuosi" to further the contemporary cause of natural philosophy, together with the superstition and credulity reflected in Newes from the Dead, for example. While its most eminent practitioners achieved scientific results, natural philosophy also afforded interest and entertainment of a far less rigorous kind. Ultimately, however, the real wonder and awe it inspired — through the microscope man could literally see "a little Heaven in the Creatures" (C II.12) and thus enhance his awareness of God's skill as the architect of nature and His benevolence in the endowment He bestowed on man — were not merely diverting. If the Oxford natural philosophers might reject some of John Webster's more radical

emphases, they would acknowledge that, through natural philosophy, "the wonderful works of the Creator are discovered, and innumerable benefits produced" (AE 69).

If Boyle's laboratory became "a kind of Elysium", an anatomical theatre was for William Petty "(without metaphor) a Temple of God" and anatomy itself "the most God-like of all other illustrious faculties".[47] Through the "theological use of natural philosophy", practised in what could be seen "(without metaphor)" as temples of God, men might strive towards "seats of bliss". Ultimately the theological element is less an external "use" than an internal motive. "Religious conceptions were . . . definitely integrated with sentiments basic to the contemporary science and philosophy . . . the ideals and goals of religion loomed large and science was regarded as an efficient means for the attainment of them."[48]

In Some Considerations touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy (1663), one of several works in which he dealt with the "theological use of natural philosophy" he had wanted to explain in 1649, Boyle emphasized the three-fold aspect of natural philosophy that he had spoken of in his letter to his sister.[49] "The two chief advantages, which a real acquaintance with nature brings to our minds are first, by instructing our understandings, and gratifying our curiosities; and next, by cherishing our devotion" (UEP 2). Thus "contemplation of the creatures" leads both to the "instruction of the prince" of creation, man, and the "glory of the author", God, through man's consequent appreciation and praise. Boyle quoted the Hermetic writings to support his affirmation that man's praises are the noblest offerings he can

make to the supreme being (UEP 53). His praises are the more worthy the more they are based on a "real acquaintance" with nature, that of natural philosophy.

This three-fold notion, and the Hermetic idea, correspond to certain major emphases in Traherne's work. To consider these here is to anticipate a further more thorough discussion of the later texts, but Traherne's insistence on the "contemplation of GODS Works" (C II.3) may be re-affirmed. This "contemplation" contributes to man's realisation of his place as "Heir of the World" (C I.3) and also "Discovers the Being of GOD" (C II.3). Traherne sees man as the "Golden link or Tie of the World, yea the Hymenaeus Marrying the Creator and his Creatures together; made as David witnesseth a little lower than the Angels" (C IV.74).[50] As "A Messenger between the Creatures, Lord of Inferior things, and familiar to those abov" (C IV.74) it is his understanding and appreciation of God's creation which makes that creation "real" at once in itself and as a contribution to man's conception of God and of himself and his own Capacity. "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF. All Things" are "the objects of your Felicity" (C II.100), and all three, God, the world and man, may be realised in images of infinite possibility and potential, inter-related in the "Circulation" that involves God's creation issuing from God and returning to him enhanced and made real by man's appreciation, his Enjoyment, of it.

In the Select Meditations of the early 1660's Traherne celebrated "man's Dominion over the world" (SM III.100). Without the "Interposure and mediation of man", who is the "Inclusive Head of all Spiritual and Material perfection" (SM III.9), God himself cannot "Enjoy" this "Adspectable world" (SM III.9). As "Heirs of

the World" (SM III.58) men realise aspects of their own nature as "the fabrick of the world and uses of [God's] creatures are . . . contemplated that we may know the Glory of Him that loveth us" (SM II.88). The "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) of the Centuries was formulated some few years after Traherne left Oxford. In Boyle's words, in Traherne's "Divine Philosophy" of the "Circulation" of creation, "contemplation of the creatures" contributes to "the instruction of the prince", man, and the "glory of the author", God.

"Divine Philosophy" may, in Traherne's view, contain "Natural Philosophy" (C III.44). The religious emphasis of natural philosophy as practised at Oxford in the 1650's suggests a close relationship between the two. It is possible that the emergence of imagery and ideas that reflect contemporary scientific concerns in Traherne's writing connects with a deeper impulse to engage those particular and practical concerns within a generalised metaphysical framework. Both "Divine" and "Natural" philosophies share the impulse to see and understand God's creation itself, man as a being alone capable of a true understanding of it, and God as the origin of both. Traherne remarks in the Early Notebook that, "That all things are our Treasures immediately we owe it to the Goodness of our Nature. but finaly to him from whom we received both it and them" (EN 235). This three-fold emphasis on the "Treasure" of creation, the "Goodness of our Nature" and the bounty and skill of God the creator might be acknowledged not only by Boyle but by fellow members of the "experimentall philosophicall clubbe" and other contemporaries of Traherne at Oxford in the 1650's.

CHAPTER 3

Traherne, Credenhill and Susanna Hopton

This short chapter introduces the Select Meditations, the only significant extant manuscript of original work not thought to have been completed in London, and gives some account of the remainder of Traherne's work belonging to neither the Oxford nor the London periods. This latter material is examined here more for what it reveals of Traherne's life and historical circumstance than for its intrinsic interest as writing, which is nevertheless considerable. It should be emphasized that it is only with certain reservations that this interval can be spoken of as the period of Traherne's residence in the village of Credenhill in Herefordshire. He was appointed Rector of Credenhill under the Commonwealth in 1657 and re-appointed under the restored monarchy in 1661. It is not known, however, whether Traherne moved to Credenhill in 1661 or 1664, or at sometime between these two dates.[1] By the end of 1669 he was in London. The period under consideration here may therefore be defined as circa 1660-1669. It may in fact be erroneous to associate either the Select Meditations or the Ficino Notebook, which appear to date from early and late within this period respectively, with Credenhill. It is, however, to the presumed Credenhill period that their dates of composition most readily if not conclusively correspond.

Two items extant only in manuscript may be discussed first. The manuscript of the Select Meditations is an important recent discovery, acquired and attributed to Traherne by James Osborn in 1964.[2] The extant manuscript is of some 200 leaves of small octavo, but some 40 or 43 leaves are missing at the beginning. It contains prose

paragraphs or meditations like those of the Centuries of Meditations and is similarly organised. There were originally 368 pieces disposed in 4 Centuries. The first complete piece is now the eighty-second of the First Century, and there are extant less than 287 of the original 368 meditations. After SM IV.68 there are 9 blank pages, so, as in the Centuries, Traherne never accomplished any project he might have had to complete a certain number of Centuries. Unlike the Centuries of Meditations, however, the Select Meditations were given titles by Traherne. The beginning of the First Century is missing, but at the head of the Second, Third and Fourth is the title Select Meditations and the sub-title "The Second Century" and so on. As Louis Martz observes "The title is of considerable interest, since it implies the existence of a larger body of meditations by Traherne".[3] It would also seem to imply that the meditations were written down without a dominant plan and perhaps organised as Centuries only for convenience and order: only the lost early part of the manuscript would resolve Margoliouth's doubt as to whether, in the Centuries of Meditations at least, Traherne deliberately set out to write Centuries as such (M I.x-xi).[4] The possible "larger body" of similar pieces may or may not have been written down in this form. Such a body would be large: the Select Meditations and the Centuries of Meditations together comprise about 150,000 words. Both groups of meditations may be collections of informal pieces written at various times and without a definite plan. Neither have a strongly pre-determined content or coherence and neither were actually finished: both manuscripts contain blank pages after the writing ceases. The Select Meditations manuscript was conclusively identified as Traherne's because it contains the poem "All Musick, Sawces, Feasts, Delights and Pleasures"

printed in Christian Ethicks (SM IV.60; CE 171; M II.186). The manuscript itself provides no indication of date, but there are references to the restored king (SM I.82) and to the re-established church (SM III.25) so it must date from after 1660. The remark "As long as our Nation continue in peace" (SM I.86) suggests a date before the Dutch Wars beginning in 1665. Given a date no more precise than circa 1660-1665 it is not therefore possible to assert that the Select Meditations were written at Credenhill, for there is no definite evidence for Traherne's presence there before 1664. Although he may have been in Oxford until 1661 or later it is not possible at present to state precisely when or where the Select Meditations were written down.

The second unpublished manuscript to be discussed here is a notebook. Like the manuscript of the Poems of Felicity it is part of the Burney collection. It is not mentioned by Margoliouth but has been called the Ficino Notebook by Carol Marks.[5] It measures 7 inches by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches and is of 59 leaves. It seems that after Traherne's death this, with the Poems of Felicity copied by Philip Traherne and a copy of the Greek gospels brought by Philip from Turkey, was in the possession of Philip Traherne and later passed from him to Charles Burney.[6] The Ficino Notebook, like the manuscript of the Select Meditations, is of marginal date, in this case of the late 1660's and before the Centuries of Meditations.[7] Since it is not known precisely when the Centuries were written, although they can be dated within the London period of 1669-1674, the Ficino Notebook may itself be an early notebook from that same period, or it may date from late in the Credenhill period.

This manuscript is unusual in bearing Traherne's signature

(FN 1^{v}). It is in Latin throughout apart from a few incidental notes. Traherne gave the notebook a general heading, "PLATONIS PHILOSOPHI Speculationes practicae A MARSILIO FICINO breviter digestae" (FN 3^{r}), suggesting that he intended an extensive study of Platonic thought as rendered by Ficino. He annotated Ficino's Epitomes of and Commentaries on the Platonic dialogues, following fairly closely the order established in the 1576 edition of Ficino's Opera Omnia, but broke off after the Epitome of the fifth book of the Republic. There are then some notes from an anonymous life of Socrates with the title "Observationes quaedem digniores a SOCRATIS vita — Qui Platoni Magister erat veraciter excerptae" (FN 46^{r}-56^{r}), followed by a "Correllarium" to the same work (FN 56^{v}-57^{v}). The final pages of the manuscript contain miscellaneous notes on Socrates, including the "learned Gale's" account of Socrates' death which was probably added later by an amanuensis under a heading written by Traherne,[8] and some fragments from Ficino's Hermetic essay ("Argumentum Marcilij Ficini Florentini In Librum Mercurij Trismegisti", FN 58^{r-v}). There are also some notes on an anonymous and untraced work ("Stoicismus Christianus", FN 59^{r}) and a list of "Socrates his Disciples" (FN 59^{v}). Valuable as the manuscript is as explicit evidence of Traherne's interest in Platonism, most of the notes are very brief. Traherne practised his usual notebook technique of rigorous selection. Like the later Commonplace Book, however, where the notes themselves are much more extensive, the range of reference is much wider than the notes directly imply. A study of all the Traherne manuscripts suggests that what he actually wrote down is often no more than a clue, to serve to release associated patterns of thought. The notes are reminders and abstracts

of reading and thought, suggestions rather than statements. That is an interesting speculation if it is also applied to the often note-like Select Meditations and Centuries of Meditations.

Traherne made notes in the Ficino Notebook on Ficino's Epitomes of the Meno, Euthyphro, Lysis, Thaetetus, Ion, Statesman, Euthydemus Charmides, Laches, Menexenus and Republic (Books One to Five) among the dialogues now considered genuine; on the Epitomes of the Hipparchus, Erastae (Amatores), Alcibiades I and II, Minos and Greater Hippias among dialogues no longer regarded as being by Plato; and on the Commentaries on the Parmenides, Philebus and Sophist.[9] The method of annotation, however, recalls Traherne's treatment of Bacon's De Augmentis Scientiarum in the Early Notebook. It is brief and fragmented with a tendency to the aphoristic. Traherne uses Ficino's sub-titles, indicating what Ficino saw as the main emphasis of each dialogue, as his main titles. He then gives a reference to the dialogue by name, and notes only what seems directly relevant to his title. So, in the Meno he seeks comments on virtue (Ficino: "In Menonem de virtute, Epitomae"), in the Minos on laws (Ficino: "In Minoem, vel de lege, Epitomae"), and in the Euthyphro on holiness (Ficino: "In Euthyphronem, vel de sanctitate, Epitomae"). His reading of the Republic, if only of Books One to Five here, appears to have been more thorough — there are minor references to this dialogue throughout the manuscript, so it is possible that Traherne was already acquainted with it. As with Bacon's De Augmentis, however, the rather fragmentary nature of the manuscript notes does not necessarily detract from their importance as clues, albeit rather cryptic ones, to the importance of Platonic elements in Traherne's thought. He seems to have been more interested in Plato than his

translator and commentator, Ficino, and equally interested in Socrates, possibly in terms of an attempt to trace the origin of Platonic thought. The notes on the lives of Plato and Socrates are in fact the most copious in the manuscript. As the Ficino Notebook is not central to the present study a brief examination of only two entries will be made here.

Traherne's notes "On the nature of Man" ("De natura Hominis", FN 13^{r-v}; from Ficino's Epitome of Alcibiades I) have an obvious connection with his own notion of man and his Capacity as the image of God and heir of the world and with the ideas he was to quote from Pico della Mirandola (C IV.74-78) and the Hermetic writings (CE 224-34) in his later work. He notes here both the physical usefulness of man's body and his mental and spiritual ability to participate in the Platonic "rational mind". Man's mind is the exemplar of the divine mind, and in his own concept of the divine mind he is able to propose to himself a representation of an absolute Good. God can be identified as the absolute or ultimate Good ("De Summo Bono", FN 18^{r}; from Ficino's Commentary on the Philebus). Man is able to strive to achieve this absolute Good himself, and it is in this striving for perfection that he fulfils himself and realises his Capacity. Philosophy is a medium for this striving for perfection and a possible means of its accomplishment. Philosophy includes morality, theology and mathematics, and it is implied that it also includes other areas of thought and practice. Traherne later thought of himself as a philosopher (C IV.3).

Philosophy is the subject of another interesting note ("De Philosophia", FN 11^{r}; from Ficino's Epitome of the Erastae). Philosophy, Traherne observes, is itself divine, and includes both

contemplation and action (see C IV.1). It offers man an opportunity to gain the understanding necessary to the direction of human life, and by implication the direction of that life towards the absolute or ultimate Good. The Platonic emphasis on the relationship between the individual's "goodness" and that of the people among whom he lives, the "goodness" of the state, is here particularly noted by Traherne. Philosophy includes not only knowledge and private prudence and morality but also the public virtues of civility and, for example, kingship. It aids all people living together in all the business of life, from questions of personal behaviour to the administration of the household or the state: it is necessary to the achievement of Justice which, whether in the private or the public realm, is an earthly equivalent of the ultimate and absolute heavenly Good. Traherne is rarely given credit for awareness of such ideas, but his own notion of Felicity can be closely associated with this attitude to the Good. His "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) includes both "Activ" and "Contemplativ" "Happiness" (C IV.3) and seeks relevance to "This Life", "the most precious Season in all Eternity" (C IV.93). There are "hard lessons, in a pervers and Retrograde World to be practiced" (C IV.54) but these lessons will benefit all men in the "true Estate of this World" (C IV.20).

Neither of the two published works written within this period were printed until more than twenty years after Traherne's death, the Thanksgivings in 1699 and the Meditations on the Creation in 1717. It was during the Credenhill period that Traherne's association with Susanna Hopton would have been at its closest.[10] Very little is known about this but a great deal has been surmised. Hopton's life is a minor history of religious and political controversy. Born

Susanna Harvey, she was Royalist and Episcopalian under Charles I. Secretly converted to Roman Catholicism during the Interregnum, she married Richard Hopton, a Parliamentarian officer who became a Royalist supporter after the regicide. At the Restoration she again became a member of the Church of England. Traherne's brother Philip married her niece, Susan, who was to be an executor of Thomas' will (M I.xxvi-xxvii). The period of Traherne's life in question and the details of his relationship with Susanna Hopton are beyond the main scope of this study, but it should be pointed out that while Margoliouth confidently asserts that in Herefordshire "Mrs. Hopton became the centre of a religious society which included Thomas Traherne" (M I.xxxiv) the evidence for this, especially for Traherne's involvement, is slight. There certainly was some connection between Traherne and Susanna Hopton, but the existence even of her "religious society" is not a proven fact. The Dictionary of National Biography remains the major source of information about this. While it remains possible that the Centuries of Meditations were written for Hopton once Traherne, in London, could no longer maintain personal contact with her (the Hoptons lived at Kington, fifteen miles from Credenhill), this relationship need not be unduly emphasized. If this is the main reason for the writing of the Centuries, why were the very similar Select Meditations written when Traherne was, presumably, in direct contact with Susanna Hopton? However close their relationship may have been it is misleading to assume that there was complete parity between the opinions of Hopton and Traherne. The Centuries aim, explicitly, to teach the person for whom they were written, and to explain "those Truths you love, but know not" (C I.2). It is interesting, however, that the two works by Traherne probably written

in this period, the Thanksgivings and Meditations on the Creation, owe their near-contemporary publication in part at least to Susanna Hopton. These are in themselves very different works, but their most interesting features from the point of view of the present study are the common circumstances of their posthumous publication. As far as their composition is concerned they are both early pieces, dateable on mainly stylistic evidence to the early 1660's.

As a book the Thanksgivings constitute by far the most elegant near-contemporary publication of Traherne's work. It is a neat duodecimo of 148 pages with prefatory matter. It includes a frontispiece, a somewhat rudimentary engraving showing people in a landscape adoring a shining triangle containing the Hebrew word "God" and surrounded by angels, or representations of human souls, and cherubs in clouds. Quotations from Psalms appropriate to the theme of thanksgiving are printed above and below the engraving (Psalm 148, verses 1,2,11,12; Psalm 150, verse 6). The full title of the volume, which is not necessarily Traherne's title, is "A Serious and Pathetical Contemplation Of the Mercies of God, In Several Most Devout and Sublime Thanksgivings for the same". The details of publication are unusual: "Published By the Reverend Doctor Hicks, At the request of a Friend of the Authors".[11] The "Friend of the Authors" (i.e. "Author's" — the book is later said to be by one particular author who is all but named as Traherne) is probably Susanna Hopton, who knew George Hickes, the publisher of the Thanksgivings, who, with Nathaniel Spinckes, was also involved in the publication of the Meditations on the Creation. This formed the first part of A Collection of Meditations and Devotions "reviewed and set forth" by Hickes and published by Spinckes in 1717.[12]

Some confusion surrounds both these publications. The anonymous Thanksgivings and Meditations on the Creation are almost certainly by Traherne. The Preface to the Thanksgivings gives a direct attribution for that work: the author was a Chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman who, "being removed out of the Country", "died young" (M I.xxxii). This corresponds to Traherne's life: he came from Herefordshire to London in 1669 as Bridgeman's Chaplain and died in 1674 at the age of thirty seven. The case of the Meditations on the Creation is more complicated. The title page of the 1717 Collection attributes all three parts to "the First Reformer of the Devotions in The Ancient Way of Offices", Susanna Hopton.[13] The Meditations on the Creation, however, are now attributed to Traherne.[14]

Traherne's Meditations on the Creation[15] compose "An Hexameron" (1717 Collection $A7^{r}$): there are six meditations, one to each day of the creation.[16] The subject of each meditation is God's work of creation on each of the six days as narrated in Genesis. Each meditation quotes biblical texts, particularly the Psalms, and each "Day" concludes with a poem. The creation is presented "not by way of Commentary or Explication, but rather of Recital and Admiration" (1717 Collection $A8^{r}$). Man is "one that is to render Praise and Thanksgiving to God for all his Works" (1717 Collection 85). His thanksgiving cannot be based on superficial observation: he must "understandingly praise" God for his works (1717 Collection 38) and "prize every thing according to its Value" (1717 Collection 37).

This celebration of the physical world is not shared by the other two parts of the 1717 Collection. The Meditations and Devotions on the Life of Christ[17] comprise "applicatory Prayers upon the Merits

of our Saviour" (1717 Collection 306). The Daily Devotions[18] contain "penitential Confessions, Effectual Absolutions, Charitable Intercessions . . . [and] . . . Tears, Sighs and Groans" (1717 Collection 372-73). These offer thanksgiving not for the work of creation and man's Capacity to appreciate it but for "our excellent Liturgy" (1717 Collection 372). "Regeneration" and "Corrobation" are in the eucharist (1717 Collection 373) not in the actual communion of man with God through the medium of the world. The importance accorded to the liturgy in both these works suggests the hand of Susanna Hopton, whose special interest this was. Hickes had already published her "Reformed" version of John Austin's Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices. This had originally been published in Paris, because its concern to anglicize Roman Catholic rites was not acceptable in the Church of England as re-established in 1660.

The Thanksgivings accomplish the duty of understanding praise outlined in the Meditations on the Creation through celebration of many of the "Common Things" (C III.53) of the physical world, notably the human body ("Thanksgivings for the Body", M II.214-29). These are known and appreciated through man's soul ("Thanksgivings for the Soul", M II.229-44) and his "Power, To enjoy all things" (M II.237, l.320). The Thanksgivings offer lists of objects and attributes as in themselves sufficient cause for praise, and frame these lists with abstract consideration of God's generosity and the wealth of man's endowment. God has "made this World the Chamber of [his] presence" (M II.219, l.180) and through understanding of it man, able to "Comprehend the Heavens . . . [and] . . . Measure all the Spaces beyond the Heavens", can himself "Receive the Deity of the eternal God" (M II.230, ll.38,40,41). There are also

"Thanksgivings for the Glory of God's Works" (M II.244-56) and "A Thanksgiving and Prayer for the NATION" (M II.320-31).

The anonymous Preface to the Thanksgivings includes the only surviving sketch of Traherne's character. He was

> so fully bent upon that Honourable Function in which he was engaged; and so wonderfully transported with the Love of God to Mankind, with the excellency of those Divine Laws which are prescribed to us, and with those inexpressible Felicities to which we are entitled by being created in, and redeemed to, the Divine Image, that he dwelt continually amongst these thoughts, with great delight and satisfaction, spending most of his time when at home, in digesting his notions of these things into writing, and was so full of them when abroad, that those who would converse with him, were forced to endure some discourse upon these subjects, whether they had any sense of Religion, or not. And therefore to such he might be sometimes thought troublesome, but his company was very acceptable to all such as had any inclinations to Vertue, and Religion . . . He was a man of a cheerful and sprightly Temper, free from any thing of the sourness of formality, by which some great pretenders of Piety rather disparage and misrepresent true Religion, than recommend it; and therefore was very affable and pleasant in his Conversation, ready to do all good Offices to his Friends, and Charitable to the Poor almost beyond his ability.
> (M I.xxxi-xxxii).

This is particularly interesting if Susanna Hopton's acquaintance with Traherne, as a "Friend of the Authors", was at all close. Hopton's friendship with Hickes is also of interest. Both Hickes and Spinckes (who brought out the 1717 Collection after the deaths of Hopton and Hickes) were close friends of Susanna Hopton. All three seem to have shared views on the anglican liturgy. Both Hickes and Spinckes were younger than Traherne, and it is unlikely that he ever met them.[19] Both achieved some recognition as clergymen in the 1670's and early 1680's — both were, at different times, Chaplains

to the Duke of Lauderdale, and Hickes was a Chaplain to the King after 1681 — but both refused allegiance to William and Mary after the 1688 revolution and were suspended and deprived, Hickes in 1689 and Spinckes in 1690, because of their commitment to the "ancient way of offices". Hickes' name appears on the title page of Traherne's Thanksgivings and at the foot of a prefatory letter in that volume, published in 1699. As a non-juror since 1689, however, he had been living in partial concealment in Oxford, in London, and abroad. He had been elected titular bishop of Thetford in $16\frac{94}{95}$ but was unable to practice his beliefs openly. He emerged from retirement only in 1699, so his part in the publication of the Thanksgivings must have been among the first of his public acts. The title page prominently proclaims both his and Hopton's part: "Published By the Reverend Doctor Hicks, At the request of a Friend of the Authors". The terms in which the unsigned Preface "To the Reader" recommends Traherne's work are reminders of Hickes' presence. The Thanksgivings are offered as "the Remains of a very devout Christian" in an attempt to "retrieve the Spirit of Devotion, and the sacred Fires of Primitive Christianity" amid "the unhappy decay of true Piety . . . the Immoralities of the Age . . . and too evident contempt of Religion" (M I.xxxi). This suggests a commitment to the "ancient way of offices" which the Thanksgivings do not share. The attribution to Traherne is unambiguous but he is not actually named ("To tell you who he was, is I think, to no purpose", M I.xxxi). Nor is there any mention of his other publications, Roman Forgeries and Christian Ethicks: contrary to the implication here, the Thanksgivings by no means comprise the whole of his "Remains". What matters to the author of the Preface is that Traherne lived "in the late disordered Times

when the Foundations were cast down, and this excellent Church laid in the dust, and dissolved into Confusion and Enthusiasme" and that he "never failed any one day either publicly or in his private closet" to practise strict religious rites (M I.xxxii). In the Select Meditations, written soon after the Restoration, Traherne praised the re-established Church, chiefly as the focus for a new unity in a country recently split by religious civil war (SM III.25). His concern then was not for particular liturgical forms. Such details are in fact notably absent from his writing, which is hardly at all concerned with the particularities of formal worship. The Thanksgivings, offered with the name of the non-juring Hickes on the title page, would surely have disappointed those seeking advocacy of the "ancient way of offices". The apparently deliberate separation of the Thanksgivings from Traherne's other published work — which included, in Roman Forgeries, a substantial attack on the Roman Catholic Church — suggests their recruitment to a cause that neither they nor Traherne's other writing truly support.

In 1700, when Susanna Hopton's revision of Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices was published, Hopton herself remained anonymous but Hickes' name appeared on the title page. His name appears again on the title page of the 1717 Collection. In both instances there would be some point to an appeal to non-juring sympathies: the Daily Devotions and the Meditations and Devotions on the Life of Christ emphasize the importance of "our excellent Liturgy" and imply a commitment to the "ancient way". All three works, Daily Devotions, Devotions in the Ancient Way and Meditations and Devotions on the Life of Christ, are devotional handbooks. Their explicit liturgical aspect is absent from Traherne's Meditations on

the Creation as from the Thanksgivings.

The Daily Devotions had appeared before, in 1673, entered in the Stationers' Register, in fact, on the same day as Traherne's Roman Forgeries.[20] From the first edition of the Daily Devotions to their re-appearance in the 1717 Collection Susanna Hopton's work, always published anonymously, can be traced as a tradition of high anglican devotional literature. Hickes was invariably involved in the publication of Hopton's work and, unlike her, was actually named on title pages. Into this tradition Traherne's Thanksgivings and Meditations on the Creation were taken, initially by Susanna Hopton as a "Friend of the Authors". This relationship between Traherne and Susanna Hopton must be acknowledged. To read the work offered within this tradition, however, is to become aware of the extent to which Traherne's writing remains outside it. The Preface to the Thanksgivings describes them as the work of "a very comprehensive Soul" (M I.xxxi) and it is in terms of this comprehensiveness that Traherne's writing may be distinguished from that of Susanna Hopton. Her particular concern for liturgical and devotional practice has almost no contact with the "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) expounded by Traherne. Traherne benefitted by his friendship with Susanna Hopton — it may have been through her influence that he became Sir Orlando Bridgeman's Chaplain[21] — and he may have written some of his work with her and her religious society in mind. In print, however, her own work suggests that, finally, their aims are very different and that, if Hopton prompted any large proportion of Traherne's writing, this served only as a partial and immediate stimulus for his comprehensive attempt to explicate a whole "Divine Philosophy" addressed perhaps, in the case of the Centuries, to one

person, but to one person as the representative of all. A "Liberal Soul Prone to Delight in the Felicity of all" (C IV.9), the philosopher was "concerned in all the world" (C III.23): "he was to treat evry Man in the Whole World as the Representativ of Mankind" (C IV.27).

CHAPTER 4

Traherne and London

1. Traherne in London, 1669-1674

In 1669 Traherne was appointed Chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Keeper of the Seal. He was to spend the remainder of his life in or near London, living either in the Bridgemans' town house, Essex House in the Strand, or at their country home at Teddington. Factual documentary evidence for this period in Traherne's life is as scant as for any other. His written output, however, was far larger than at any other time of his life and no slight achievement for any writer in a single five year period. The relative silence and apparent obscurity of the Rector of Credenhill are in marked contrast to the eager articulation of the Chaplain to the holder of the highest state office in Charles II's government. In London Traherne published two books (Roman Forgeries, 1673; Christian Ethicks, published posthumously in 1675 but entered in the Stationers' Register in August 1674, before Traherne's death in October);[1] he wrote the equivalent of at least two more (Centuries of Meditations; The Church's Year Book; and the detailed and ordered notes of the Commonplace Book); and he probably added significantly to the poems he had written while at Credenhill. Assumptions about Traherne as a retired and retiring country clergyman should be challenged. He held a sought-after position in the capital city, and it was in Restoration London that he particularly chose to write and publish.

Considerable interest is therefore attached to Roman Forgeries and Christian Ethicks, the two books that Traherne himself wanted to see in print. As these can provide direct links with the local

circumstances of Traherne's life, however, discussion of them will be delayed until it can lead directly into a wider examination of that life. Bearing in mind that the immediate consideration of the years 1669 to 1674 in Traherne's life should give major emphasis to the only works he was to publish, discussion will begin here with the writings that remained in manuscript. Among these the Centuries of Meditations are the most familiar of all Traherne's works, so consideration of the circumstances in which these were written is an appropriate means of initiating discussion of less well known texts and background.

It is possible that Traherne attached as much importance to the Centuries of Meditations as to the published works. They first appeared in print, however, only in 1908. The original manuscript is now in the Bodleian Library.[2] No evidence determines the precise date of authorship. There is evidence to suggest that the Centuries were written for Susanna Hopton, after Traherne had moved away from her circle in Herefordshire (M I.234). They are addressed to a second person, whether Susanna Hopton or any student of Felicity. This enhances their immediacy but does not limit their reference: "Lov of all" becomes an important motive (C I.33).

Margoliouth's description of the third leaf of the manuscript is significant: "A title 'Centuries of Meditations', in a hand which may be seventeenth-century but is certainly not Traherne's" (M I.x). This is the source of the title that has become so familiar: it is not necessarily Traherne's title. Although it may have been added to the manuscript by a contemporary, it is possibly a later addition. In view of the significance that become attached to this title in a climate of avid literary categorisation,[3] it is worth quoting

Margoliouth's account of the manuscript at length:

> Traherne gave the book no title, and, although many of his sections can be properly described as meditations, many cannot. The purpose of his writing was not to put his meditations on paper, but to instruct his friend in the way of Felicity: he would fill the book with "Profitable Wonders". What the manuscript suggests is that he started writing his paragraphs or sections . . . and numbering them. At the number 101 he decided not to head it '101' but to head it 'The Second Century' (or hundred) and so to start the numbering again with '1'. Though the beginning of this Second Century reverts to the main topic, which was last specially touched on in I.65, there is no real break in subject-matter between I and II. On the other hand II.100 reaches a climax which might well have concluded the work. By this time, however, Traherne was conscious that he was writing Centuries.
> (M I.x-xi).

Thus Traherne went on ~~the~~ to write the largely autobiographical third Century. In a fourth Century he "set out to expound the 'principles' of Felicity" (M I.xi). "He started a fifth Century . . . and in V.10 reached a climax with which the Centuries happily and fitly conclude. Yet it is clear from '11' at the top of the next page that Traherne, at one time at any rate, thought of going on" (M I.xi). Finally, Margoliouth observes that "I think it highly probable that the prayers and some of the paragraphs which are strictly meditations were, like the poems, already in existence and judged by Traherne to be suitable for insertion in this work. But the great body of instruction about Felicity seems to have been written currente calamo" (M I.xi).

Margoliouth, whose edition of the Centuries was the first to attempt to follow Traherne's spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and complex variation of emphasis precisely,[4] was surely better qualified to make judgements on the technique of the manuscript than

many other critics. The text they use was established by him. A reading of the Centuries in manuscript seems only to confirm his judgement. As an experience it is different to reading the printed text. That is not to say that Margoliouth's edition is not authoritative as such, but to suggest that the Centuries, with their characteristic and sometimes arbitrary sense of direction, did not aspire to authoritativeness. The verbal acrobatics of the text are complemented in the manuscript by the small but dashing italic script and the varying emphasis of space and capital. Margoliouth's judgement, as a direct reaction to the manuscript, is in many ways definitive of the reading experience. The eager writing challenges the reader's literal grasp of the text; the text itself overwhelms him in rapid kaleidoscopic effusion.[5]

That Traherne became "conscious that he was writing Centuries" only after he had been writing for some considerable time is, however, open to dispute. The Select Meditations, discovered since Margoliouth's edition of the Centuries appeared, are also organised as Centuries. There the last three Centuries bear both the title Select Meditations and the sub-title "The Second Century" and so on. Ironically, the first pages of the manuscript of the Select Meditations, which would show whether, unlike the Centuries of Meditations, these were called "Centuries" from the beginning, are missing. Margoliouth's attitude, even if in this respect ~~questionable~~ questionable, is still a tonic to what otherwise threatens to become an over-insistence on Traherne's awareness of form. If he did set out to write Centuries it must be said that in neither case did he finish or round off the works as such, although it would appear that he did make some revisions in what he had already written. The Select

Meditations end after section IV.68; the Centuries of Meditations after section V.11. Both manuscripts contain blank pages after the writing ceases. The significance of Centuries as a form for Traherne must be questioned.

Traherne often arranged his writing or notes on some principle of order.[6] Centuries, for Traherne, may be little more than that: a convenient principle of order that gives form to a series of prose paragraphs or sections that could sometimes be inter-related and necessarily consequent or sometimes individual pieces, finished in themselves and possibly unrelated to context. The idea of "Centuries" as such may be no more significant than that of the alphabetical arrangement of the Commonplace Book. The common form of Centuries, although associated with similar forms that assume or imply necessary connection between form and meaning, does demonstrate examples of the use of "Centuries" as a convenient method of disciplining heterogenous and disparate material, usually material disposed into short paragraphs or other independent sections. Bacon's Sylva Sylvarum: or, A Natural History. In Ten Centuries (1627),[7] comprises a mass of experiments and observations which all contribute to an overall heterogenous unity but could not otherwise be effectively organised. The fact that this collection was assembled by an editor and not the author himself is apposite. It is misleading to attach too much importance to Traherne's having (supposedly) written "Centuries" of "Meditations". In the two manuscripts, of the Select Meditations and Centuries of Meditations, there are extant some 697 paragraphs or sections of prose. Perhaps both are fragments from a larger collection, or partial reflections of an unrealised idea. There is no explicit statement of such or

similar intention in either. It is upon Margoliouth's studied impressions that an empirical consideration of the Centuries can be based. It is with "An Empty Book" and nothing more that the writing begins (C I.1); it is precisely in the filling of that book (C I.1) that the writer's purpose will be accomplished.

Consideration can next be given to the two manuscripts containing the great majority of Traherne's poems. The first of these is the "Dobell Folio", which occasioned the modern discovery of Traherne, and which is now in the Bodleian Library.[8] The second, although belonging to the British Museum since 1818 and attributed on the title page to "Tho: Traheron. B.D. Author of the Roman Forgeries, & Christian Ethicks", remained unrecognised until Dobell published the poems from his manuscript.[9] There are 37 poems in the Dobell Folio and 61 in Poems of Felicity; 23 are common, in some form, to both.

The copies in the Dobell Folio were made early in the London period. The Commonplace Book, which follows the poems in the same notebook, seems to cover almost the whole of the period 1669 to 1672 (if not later), so the copies of the poems were probably made before 1670. It would seem likely that most were written at Credenhill. Rather more of the Poems of Felicity may have been written in London, but this manuscript was compiled by Philip Traherne, probably after the death of his brother.[10] Philip Traherne headed these poems "Divine Reflections On the Native Objects of An Infant Ey", but his presence as the compiler of the manuscript calls into question its real usefulness and authenticity. "Philip's arrangement of the poems is on the whole a good one. His editing and changing of the text is a disaster" (M I.xv). The poems are not considered in detail

here. Doubts about their date of composition and the lack of real textual authority for any but thirty-seven poems are reasons for this. These, however, are subsidiary to a conviction that the poems as a whole represent neither Traherne's best nor most interesting work. In the prose writings it is clear that the intuitive "Reflections . . . of An Infant Ey" are superceded by the more penetrating gaze of the "Ey of Reason" (C I.25; see C IV.54). It is in terms of the "Highest Reason" (C III.2) that fulfilment is sought, and it is in relation to this that the "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) of the prose writings can best be understood. The poems are no adequate vehicle for the expression of this, and when they attempt explication of the perceptions of the eye of reason they often become little more than lists of philosophical propositions. The poems best realise the naive apprehension of the infant eye.[11] That apprehension remained, for Traherne, a valuable image of innocent spontaneity; but the poems suffer in so far as they do not mature as true reflections of the perceptions of the eye of reason. The only poems that Traherne sought to publish are those of the Christian Ethicks, which are hardly more than useful illustrations of ideas presented in the main text. His own fair copy of thirty-seven of his poems in the Dobell Folio is followed immediately by the notes of the Commonplace Book, perhaps suggesting that Traherne himself decided to direct his energies elsewhere.

Two unpublished manuscripts date from the London period: The Church's Year Book and the Commonplace Book. The Church's Year Book is discussed and analysed by Margoliouth (M I.xvii-xx) and by Carol Marks.[12] It is a notebook of 133 leaves, the dating of which has been the subject of some controversy. Margoliouth dated it 1672 or

(more probably, he thought) 1673, and suggested that certain remarks demonstrate Traherne's sympathy for his patron Bridgeman after the surrender of the Great Seal in 1672. Traherne does pray for protection "From Deifying of Kings" and "From Flattering of the People": "From all the Evils of State Good Lord Deliver us" (CYB 30^{v}). Carol Marks has shown, however, that these are quotations from Lancelot Andrewes' Private Devotions and are not original to Traherne in 1672 or 1673. In fact, Marks suggests, The Church's Year Book was composed in 1670, between April and November, long before Bridgeman became involved in the political events leading to his resignation.[13] Her evidence for this, however, is her identification of some of the handwriting in The Church's Year Book (CYB 24^{v}) as that of Philip Traherne, who was out of the country after 1670 and until 1675. As sole evidence for dating this is not absolutely convincing: parts of The Church's Year Book may date from after 1670.

It would, however, be appropriate to the contents of The Church's Year Book to date it early in Traherne's service as Bridgeman's Chaplain. It evinces a tendency to refer to sources rather than create original material and is organised as a devotional handbook based on the major feasts of the Church year. Traherne may have composed this theologically sound but somewhat uninspiring piece to please his patron. Reservations must be made about the enthusiasm often attributed to Traherne as well as Susanna Hopton for the details and observance of high anglican liturgy, but this would have suited what is thought to have been Bridgeman's own conventional anglican piety. As that assumption takes too little account of Bridgeman's direct initiative in the 1668 Comprehension Bill, however, so the formal

framework of The Church's Year Book is ultimately inadequate to Traherne's urge to written expression. It is "more restricted in scope and more narrowly defined in purpose" than any other Traherne manuscript.[14] About one half of the pages contain material from other sources. These sources include, fundamentally and all-pervasively, the Bible and Book of Common Prayer; and also Lancelot Andrewes' Private Devotions, The Auncient Ecclesiastical Histories (1577), sermons by John Donne, Daniel Featley's Ancilla Pietatis (1626), The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctor S. Augustine (1631), William Austin's Devotionis Augustinianae Flamma (1635), Jeremy Taylor's The Great Exemplar of Sanctity (1649), Edward Sparke's Scintillula Altaris (1652), and Anthony Sparrow's A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer (1665).[15] Marks proposes that The Church's Year Book "escapes being a mere potpourri" because of Traherne's "habit of assimilating to his own manner and thought the style and ideas of other writers".[16] She makes a case, which she herself seems to find ultimately unconvincing, for The Church's Year Book being a product of Traherne's own mind. However, her references to some few passages which do have contact with Traherne's other work only reinforce the sense that these passages are somewhat out of context here. The quotations are perhaps representative in what appears to be deliberately compiled as a devotional handbook, but, precisely, Traherne selects his authors only as "a thoughtful priest of the Church".[17] The sources would make the strongest case for a full exposition of Traherne's work as determined or influenced by traditions of meditation and devotion. Traherne speaks of "the Sweet Methods of Meditation" here (CYB 75^{v}). If a substantial and coherent theory could be extracted

from these references, however, Marks' observation about the sources of The Church's Year Book remains true: "none of them is a 'source' in the sense of a fountainhead of [Traherne's] thought . . . They are instead grist for his mill; the force which drives the mill is more complex".[18] Even when Traherne's more vigorous personal style breaks into confident expatiation redolent of his other writings the effect is here somewhat empty. The Church's Year Book is an interesting document and evidence for another aspect of Traherne's intellectual interests, but it has few claims to attention in terms of originality or widely ranging speculative interest. Recalling Traherne's assertion in Christian Ethicks — "I need not treat of Vertues in the ordinary way" (CE 3) — it is possible to suggest that a conventional spiritual or devotional handbook would not hold his full interest throughout. "There is a Glory in the Work which the silent Habit is uncapable of" (CE 191): the "Sweet Methods of Meditation" do not offer real stimulus or fulfilment.

The Commonplace Book, however, occupying by far the larger proportion of the Dobell Folio containing Traherne's fair copy of his poems, is the most interesting among all unpublished Traherne manuscripts.[19] It is analysed by Margoliouth (briefly; M I.xii) and by Carol Marks.[20] It can be dated no more precisely than within the London period, and represents work done in preparation for Christian Ethicks, possibly early within this period (c. 1669-70?). The handwriting is not Traherne's throughout, but the organisation of all the notes and extracts under a series of alphabetical headings (some of which are cross-referenced) written or dictated by Traherne would allow for the assistance of an amanuensis. This can be traced

in the notes themselves: "Traherne responded personally to, made use of, even manipulated, his sources, [the amanuensis] merely made verbatim transcripts".[21] It seems that Traherne directed the enterprise fairly closely, and a good proportion of the notes are in fact in his own hand. He can be seen "using his sources as a point of departure for an expanded consideration of the same topic",[22] but his tendency to reduce the results of his extensive reading to concise points of opinion and controversy is also notable. The sources of the notes encompass a representative proportion of the classical learning extant in the seventeenth century. The contemporary sources, which account for the majority of longer notes, in contrast to the brief references accorded to classical writers, include John Everard's translation of the Hermetic The Divine Pymander (1650), Theophilus Gale's The Court of the Gentiles (Part One, 1669; Part Two, 1670), and a sermon by Isaac Barrow preached in London in 1671, The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor (1671).[23] The Commonplace Book provides substantial evidence for the learning and intellectual ambition behind all Traherne's work: it will later be discussed in greater detail. This notebook, and The Church's Year Book, together with the Centuries of Meditations, Roman Forgeries and Christian Ethicks, shows that Traherne's time in London was a period of considerable preoccupation with reading, note-taking and original writing. This survey of his activities as a writer in these last five years of his life may conclude with a consideration of the two books he published.

The only book of his that Traherne actually saw published was Roman Forgeries. It was "Printed by S. and B. Griffin, for Jonathan Edwin at the three Roses in Ludgate-Street" in 1673, being entered

in the Stationers' Register on 25 September of that year.[24] It is a scholarly but unusually short discussion of the ways in which and the extent to which the Roman Catholic Church was thought to falsify historical fact, either by outright forgery of documents or by dogmatic interpretation: as the title says, "a TRUE ACCOUNT OF FALSE RECORDS Discovering the IMPOSTURES AND Counterfeit Antiquities OF THE CHURCH OF ROME". The book was published anonymously (the title page says it is "By a Faithful Son of the Church of ENGLAND") with a Dedication to Sir Orlando Bridgeman: "TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE S^{r} ORLANDO BRIDGEMAN KNIGHT and BARONET One of HIS MAJESTIES Most Honourable Privy Council; The AUTHOR Devoteth his best Services AND DEDICATETH The USE and BENEFIT of his Ensuing Labors". Margoliouth suggested that Roman Forgeries contains material used by Traherne for an exercise or thesis for his B.D. degree (M I.xxviii). Traherne, however, says that he tried to write a more popular book. He saw no need to "expatiate downwards" to the last scholarly detail: this would "overswell the Book, which is intended to be little, for the use and benefit of all" (RF B6^{r-v}). He does state that work on Roman Forgeries was done in the Bodleian Library (RF B6^{v}-B7^{r}), however, and the book does offer considerable evidence of "the intellectual quality and austerity of Traherne".[25]

Traherne deals particularly with forgeries in records of the Councils of the Roman Catholic Church. His major inquiry is into the Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore (Isidori Mercatoris Collectio Decretalium) as published in Jacques Merlin's edition of Collected Councils (Conciliorum quatuor generalium, 1530) (RF 28-64). This collection of papal decrees and letters was assembled in the ninth century.[26] Parts are genuine but most were forged, the apparent

object of falsification being to give authority to a separation of Church and state. Merlin attributed the collection to Isidore of Sevile (c.570-636) but Traherne disputes this and uses the suspected forgery as an attack on the whole Roman Catholic Church. Forgery is a crime, and "If the Church of Rome be guilty . . . her Antiquity and Tradition, the two great Pillars upon which she standeth, are very rotten, and will moulder into nothing" (RF 3). His other chapters include similar discussions of collections of records by Petrus Crabbe, Batholome Carranza, Laurentius Surius, and Severinus Binius.[27] Traherne's scholarship later received a tribute from Thomas Comber in his Roman Forgeries in the Councils (1689).

Traherne had originally intended his book "for the use and benefit of all", however, and it is in relation to his comprehensive attack on the Roman Catholic Church that this aim can be seen. Gilbert Burnet observed that in the early 1670's "Popery was everywhere preached against. The bishops . . . charged the clergy to preach against popery, and to inform the people aright in the controversies between us and the church of Rome. This alarmed the court as well as the city and the whole nation".[28] It was in Roman Forgeries that Traherne, for his part, sought to "inform the people aright" in these controversies. In demonstrating the "rotten" foundations of the Roman Catholic Church Traherne seeks to show that Roman Catholics have attempted to "steal away the Truth" (RF $B2^{v}$). A church guilty of forgery cannot claim legitimate credence. "It is sufficient to prove that all the Streams are infected by the Poyson that is thrown into the Fountain-head" (RF $B6^{r-v}$).

Contemporary attacks on Roman Catholicism "alarmed the court", as Burnet observes. The Queen was a Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholic

Duke of York had ceased attending the Chapel Royal in 1672 after John Tillotson had preached a sermon there on "the hazard of being saved in the Church of Rome". Charles II himself was already widely suspected to be a Roman Catholic. It is significant that Roman Forgeries, dedicated to Bridgeman, was published only after Bridgeman had ceased to be a member of the government. Although research for the book may have been done some ten years earlier, its publication in 1673 as an attack on the foundations of the Roman Catholic Church bears directly upon contemporary controversy.

In 1673 John Milton inquired as to "what best means may be us'd against the growth of Popery" in his pamphlet Of True Religion.[29] "It is unknown to no man", he wrote, "that the increase of Popery is at this day no small trouble and offence to the greatest part of the Nation".[30] "Popery" is chiefly upheld by the "ignorance in Scripture" Traherne sought, in part, to inform.[31] Milton remarks upon contemporary attacks on Popery — "some have already in Publick with many considerable Arguments exhorted the people to beware the growth of this Romish Weed"[32] — and regards it as a common duty to lend his hand "to so good a Purpose".[33] He will not "enter into the Labyrinth of Councels and Fathers", however, for that is "an intangl'd wood which the Papist loves to fight in, not with hope of Victory, but to obscure the shame of an open overthrow".[34] Traherne attempted an "open overthrow" on his own side by a foray into the "intangl'd wood" of the forged councils, attempting to produce a less than usually obscure guide "for the use and benefit of all". The sharper mind of Milton perceived that "such manner of dispute . . . to Learned Men, is useful and very commendable" but also that he must "insist now on what is plainer

to Common apprehension".[35] Traherne's attack, if less direct, was no less thorough. Milton, though, inevitably connected Popery with what he saw as the contemporary national decline: "it is a general complaint that this Nation of late years is grown more numerously and excessively vitious than heretofore; Pride, Luxury, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Cursing, Swearing, bold and open Atheism every where abounding: Where these grow, no wonder if Popery also grow a pace".[36] It will later be necessary to examine, in Traherne's other writings, his own reaction to the society that provoked this response from his older contemporary.

Traherne did not live quite long enough to see Christian Ethicks published. It was entered in the Stationers' Register on 6 August 1674, and announced in the Term Catalogues for Michaelmas of that year.[37] The title page is dated 1675. Traherne died in October 1674 and was buried at Teddington on 10 October (M I.xxviii). As for Roman Forgeries the publisher of Christian Ethicks was Jonathan Edwin, and the book was printed at "the Three Roses in Ludgate-street" again probably by Sarah and Bennet Griffin. A note was inserted in copies of Christian Ethicks asking the reader to pardon mistakes in the printing due to the writer's death "hapning immediately after this Copy came to the Press". Both Christian Ethicks and Roman Forgeries, however, are badly printed — Christian Ethicks being somewhat the worse — and both contain numerous misprints and erratic pagination. Some damaged type was used and the capitalisation is often more unusual than Traherne's own in his manuscripts. The title page of Christian Ethicks assigns the book to Traherne by name and cites his authorship of Roman Forgeries: "Christian ETHICKS: OR, Divine MORALITY. Opening the WAY to

BLESSEDNESS, By the RULES of VERTUE AND REASON. By THO. TRAHERNE, B.D. Author of the Roman Forgeries".

Noting here only that "VERTUE" and "REASON" are the guiding principles behind the book, it will be necessary later to consider the Christian Ethicks as an exposition of the thought of the Centuries all the more interesting for having been published in the seventeenth century. It is certainly the nearest Traherne came to seeing his own philosophy expounded publicly in his own time. The "WAY to BLESSEDNESS" is none other than the path to Felicity traced in the Centuries: the connection between the two is explicit. Christian Ethicks was intended "for vulgar Apprehensions" if not for "the very meanest readers" (CE 23). It is not a spiritual or moral handbook. In The Whole Duty of Man (1658; attributed to Richard Allestree) there is a good example of such work, Traherne says (CE 3), so he "need not treat of Vertues in the ordinary way". Similarly, "the French Charron" has presented a sceptical view of the world, showing the necessity of "Wisdom" to the maintaining of a man's individual integrity (CE 3).[38] So in Christian Ethicks Traherne speaks not of the "Duties enjoyned by the Law of GOD", nor of the "Prudential Expedients and Means for a man's Peace and Honour on Earth" but rather of "the reality, force and efficacy of Vertue . . . its Beauty, Dignity and Glory" by way of the "advantages" he "gained in the nature of Felicity (by many years earnest and diligent study)" (CE 3).

Little can be learned about Traherne's life from Christian Ethicks, but he does speak of his acquaintance with "high-born Souls in Courts and Palaces" (CE 260). He suggests that he was "admitted to the society and friendship of Great men" (CE 173) and

tells how he "often experienced" their confidence: they entrusted to him "their Wives and Children . . . their Gold, their Bonds, their Souls, their Affairs, their Lives, their Secrets, Houses, Liberties, and Lands" (CE 200). He also refers to his patron Bridgeman as an example of charity and humility: "My Lord Bridgeman, late Lord Keeper, confessed himself in his Will to be but a Steward of his Estate, and prayed GOD to forgive him all his offences; in Getting, Mispending, or not Spending it as he ought to do: And that after many Charitable and Pious works, perhaps surmounting his Estate, though concealed from the notice and knowledge of the World" (CE 239). While Bridgeman was still Lord Keeper another book, like Roman Forgeries a year later, was dedicated to him: Richard Cumberland's De Legibus Naturae (1672).[39] Cumberland, who was to become Bishop of Peterborough in 1691, had received a living as a result of Bridgeman's patronage in 1667. His book was reprinted many times well into the eighteenth century, and foreshadows in a number of ways later work by moralists of the eighteenth century. It is not without contact with aspects of the thought expounded in Traherne's Christian Ethicks, however.

Cumberland sought, in De Legibus Naturae, a "Common Good" through "Benevolence": "The greatest Benevolence of every rational Agent towards all, forms the happiest State of every, and of all the Benevolent, as far as is in their Power".[40] "Benevolence" and "Self-love" were to become major preoccupations of eighteenth century moralists — of Joseph Butler, for example — but Cumberland's emphasis on Benevolence was explicitly intended as a reply to Hobbes' contrary theory of Self-love. Only later were Benevolence and a new theory of Self-love seen to coincide. Traherne, however,

had already defined an alternative form of Self-love: the author of "that arrogant Leviathan", he said, "made a great mistake . . . so far to imprison our love to our selves, so as to make it inconsistent with Charity towards others . . . [for] . . . it is impossible to love our selves, without loving other things" (CE 261). Thus "self Lov is the Basis of all Lov" (C IV.55). Traherne's "Felicity", "rightly defined, to be the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in a perfect Life by Perfect Virtue" (CE 19), is a form of the Common Good, "the happiest State", realisable through Benevolence. Traherne derived his definition from Aristotle but proposed its direct relevance to a "perfect Life" sought contemporaneously with Cumberland's Common Good.

Cumberland's "rational Agent" seeks the Common Good partly through knowledge. He praises "the happy Genius of this learned Age [in which] the intellectual Part of the World has been much illustrated by that great Accassion of Light, which former Proofs of the Being of God, and the Immortality of the Soul have receiv'd from the daily increasing knowledge of the inferior Part of Nature".[41] Traherne saw man as "the Interpreter of Nature" (C IV.74) who might "by Right Reason discover all the Mysteries of heaven" (C IV.81): "Never so much clear Knowledge in any Age", he exclaimed (CE 283).[42] This, for him, was an essential aspect of man's achievement of Perfect Life and Felicity. It is in this sense that "Natural Philosophy" contributes to Felicity (C III.44). Cumberland was more locally explicit, identifying the "great Accession of Light" and "daily increasing of knowledge" with the achievements of "those great Genius's of which the Royal Society is compos'd".[43] He thought that "the whole of moral philosophy . . . is ultimately resolv'd into natural

observations known by the Experience of all Men, or into Conclusions of true Natural Philosophy".[44] Traherne's own relationship to this idea will be examined later. It is significant in this respect that Cumberland defines "Natural Philosophy, in the large Sense", as capable of containing man's inquiry into "the Nature of our Souls" and "knowledge of the first Mover".[45] What can be emphasized here, however, is the apparent proximity of Traherne and Cumberland in London in the early 1670's. It was Hezekiah Burton, Traherne's predecessor as Chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, who wrote the dedication to Bridgeman for Cumberland's De Legibus Naturae. Cumberland and Burton may serve here, then, to introduce the patron they had in common with Traherne.

2. Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Keeper of the Seal 1667-1672

In 1667 Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon and Charles II's Lord Chancellor since the Restoration, was banished and left for France. During the next seven years no one man was to attain so dominant a position and so extensive a control in court and parliament circles. This is the period of the "Cabal", a group of ministers and court members — Thomas Clifford, Baron Clifford of Chudleigh; Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington; George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham; Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury; John Maitland, Duke of Lauderdale[46] — who, not being in competition among themselves for one centrally important post (they held independent posts concurrently or, like Buckingham, were friends of the King) were available to Charles as individual advisers and confidants. Through them he could play a complex game, the aim of which was to rule on the model of Louis XIV: without Parliament. He could play off one

member of the Cabal against another, and so, since each inevitably had his own ambitions, intentions became multiply disguised. Parliament was allowed to play very little part in this political hide-and-seek (it did not meet between April 1671 and February 1673) and no one man could ever really know the truth of motive and/or policy. The best example of this, and one to which it will be necessary to return, is the Treaty of Dover of 1670, which was produced amd signed in two copies. One copy contained a secret clause of which only Charles, Clifford and Arlington knew.

Clarendon's actual influence had not been inherently connected with his official position as Lord Chancellor. Upon his demise his power was dispersed and the official post he had held fell to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, who became Lord Keeper of the Seal rather than Lord Chancellor. Bridgeman, born probably in 1606 and educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, had a high reputation as Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. He was a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, had practised at the Bar and had been a member of Parliament. Knighted in 1643, Charles II had later awarded him the first Baronetcy of the Restoration. He had presided at the trial of the regicides, where "he did wholly rip up the unjustnesse of the war against the King".[47] In 1667 he was regarded as one of the country's foremost lawyers, and had most recently assisted in settling property disputes after the Great Fire of 1667. He seems to have been chosen by Charles for a post which was probably regarded by the King, with his absolutist ambitions, as somewhat perfunctory. The substitution of the less prestigious title of Lord Keeper for that of Lord Chancellor reflects this, as well as Charles' wish to avoid the rise of another minister of such dominance as Clarendon.

The Lord Keeper needed to be a lawyer of the greatest general repute, but, in the King's opinion, he would have little business apart from the administration of church and state patronage and the actual fixing of the Seal to state papers. Bridgeman would be an efficient functionary who would not need to be too closely informed of the details of state business.

Bridgeman received the Seal in August 1667. Pepys recorded that "the Seal is delivered to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, the man of the whole nation that is the best spoken of, and will please most people; and therefore I am mighty glad of it".[48] Bridgeman "was then at my Lord Arlington's".[49] A newsletter echoed Pepys' pleasure: "The people are transported with joy upon the lord keeper's instalment into the ministry".[50] The association with Arlington and the instalment of the new Lord Keeper into the "ministry" indicate something of Bridgeman's inclination, at least in the first two or three years of his tenure, to participate more positively in state affairs than perhaps Charles had either expected or desired. More positively, too, than later became his habit. His relationship with Arlington, a member of the Cabal, was at first professionally close, but later declined.

As Lord Keeper Bridgeman's duties included responsibility for royal patronage and for certain compensatory payments in lieu of loss or distress — dealing with the results of fire and shipwreck, for example, and with cases of all "idiots and lunatics".[51] At first, however, Bridgeman himself initiated and was involved in discussions bearing directly upon national policy. On 2 January 1668, for example, Sir William Temple wrote to Sir John Temple about negotiations with Holland: "his Majesty came to a resolution of the

greatest importance which has yet passed, I think, here in any foreign affairs . . . in which the new ministry, particularly my Lord Keeper, and my Lord Arlington, have had a very great part".[52] At least in 1667 to 1668 Bridgeman and Arlington may have been of something of central importance in state business. The writer of a newsletter in December 1667 hoped that the "Lord Keeper and Lord Arlington have spoken together" about business to which he attaches particular importance.[53] Later, in August 1668, "The Lord Keeper, Duke of Buckingham, and Lord Arlington were together in private after the Council, from 11 till near 2 o'clock".[54] On the whole, however, it would seem that the "new ministry" (an idea to which Charles would be opposed — he wanted to rule alone) never really established itself as a political force. The sharing of political power and motivation would be widely suspect and unlikely to be successful in the aggressive and deceptive individualism of Charles II's government. Bridgeman was nevertheless a senior member of the Privy Council.

Bridgeman was a prime mover in a discussion of religious tolerance, centred on the Comprehension Bill proposed in 1668. Non-conformists were "big with expectation, that their idol gods, their factious ministers, should be tolerated to prate in public" when Bridgeman was heard to be included in the government.[55] A later newsletter refers to the "Act of Comprehension, which the Lord Keeper promotes" and suggests that "it will destroy the Act for Uniformity".[56]

The Act of Uniformity was part of what has been called the "Clarendon Code", the three-fold series of measures by which the Church of England was re-established after the Restoration.

Buckingham, at the height of his influence after Clarendon's deposition, sought to change the former Lord Chancellor's religious policy. The Comprehension scheme was launched in December 1667, and a plan formulated by the following January. Buckingham was the major court figure involved, but Bridgeman and John Wilkins were the most important members of the group responsible for the written proposals. This also included Matthew Hale, Hezekiah Burton, Edward Stillingfleet and John Tillotson.[57] William Bates, Thomas Manton and Richard Baxter may also have been consulted. Thus Burnet observes that "Bridgeman and Wilkins set on foot a treaty, for a comprehension of such dissenters as could be brought into the communion of the church, and a toleration of the rest".[58] Wood remarks that the meetings were held "in the chamber of that great trimmer and latitudinarian Dr. Hezekiah Burton in Essex House, without the Temple barr, being then the habitation of sir Orl. Bridgeman, to whome Burton was chaplayne then".[59] The project was not radical and, according to Burnet, represented little more than an attempt to realise the promises made by Charles in 1660 but not embodied in the Clarendon Code. Burnet does say, however, that "This treaty became a common subject of discourse. Many books were printed upon it. All lord Clarendon's men cried out that the church was undermined and betrayed".[60] The Commons were opposed to the Bill. Having had previous warning, through Wilkins' inopportune discussion of the matter with Seth Ward, Parliament dismissed the Bill by passing a motion that no such Bill should be so much as accepted for consideration by the House.

It is after the failure of the Comprehension Bill that

Bridgeman's name appears less frequently in state records and is then more often associated with administration and matters of patronage. Bridgeman seems gradually to decline into the functionary Charles had probably intended him to be. By virtue of his office, however, he continued to move in court circles and was inevitably if not seminally involved in state affairs. One possible reason for the decline of Bridgeman's involvement as an initiator of policy is his variable health. He was over sixty when he became Lord Keeper and his health seems to have declined during his term of office. On 24 January $16\frac{68}{69}$ Pepys was summoned to a meeting of the King and Council held at Essex House, Bridgeman's home, because the Lord Keeper was temporarily bedridden: "Here all the Officers of the Navy attended, and by and by were called in to the King and Cabinet, where my Lord [Bridgeman], who was ill, did lie upon the bed. . . . And the business was to know in what time all the King's ships might be repaired fit for service".[61]

The discussion about the navy reported by Pepys is one of the threads by which Bridgeman can be connected with what, historically, was the overriding concern of the period 1667 to 1674: Britain's foreign policy, particularly relations with France and Holland, and naval affairs, especially as all these, and the ever more pressing religious question, focus in the Treaty of Dover of 1670. The Treaty, and the controversy and intrigue associated with it, is representative of the politics of the period, and also illustrates the extent to which, for Charles and his inner circle of advisors but much less so for Bridgeman, religion had a part to play in politics.[62] Charles was widely suspected to be a Roman Catholic or at least a possible convert to Roman Catholicism. The

Duke of York was known openly as a Roman Catholic and rumours of the King's conversion were frequent. His admiration for Louis XIV seemed to indicate something of his tendency in this direction, and also the political dangers of his possible conversion: French domination or English monarchical absolutism.

It was through Louis that Charles came closest to Roman Catholicism. Charles insisted that England must have an alliance with Catholic France against Protestant Holland to protect her naval and trading interests. One of his favourite arguments was that "the French will have us or Holland always with them, and if we take them not, Holland will have them".[63] This was his public policy, and was sufficiently controversial as such. It was reinforced, however, by his private motives, the final outcome of his negotiations with France being that Louis agreed to finance Charles, making him independent of Parliament and able to govern after Louis' manner, if Charles became a Roman Catholic and converted, by force if necessary and with French reinforcements, the whole of Britain to Catholicism. When a treaty was to be drawn up arrangements were made so that only Charles, Clifford and Arlington knew of the clause promising the conversion of Britain and its King in return for Louis' financial and military assistance. Thus, in 1670, the Treaty of Dover was signed in two copies; one, a useless document intended only for public use, omitting the vital clause. It is partly through such involvement with political and state matters that religious controversy became an ever more sensitive subject in the 1670's.

Meanwhile it was left to Bridgeman and other state officers who knew nothing of the secret clause to maintain what can now be

seen as a charade of government. Bridgeman, for example, had to read the King's speech to Parliament. It was the custom that a very brief address from the King would precede a longer, but still very short, speech by the Lord Keeper at the opening and closing of Parliament. The Lord Keeper read both speeches but may have written neither. In practise the speeches amount to little more than a reiteration of Charles' request for a "Supply" of money, perhaps with some mention of major policy — the union of Scotland and England in 1669 and 16$\frac{69}{70}$, for example. The King, and the Lord Keeper on his behalf, customarily thanked the Houses for their "wholesom Laws", "Advice", "Supplies and Aids"[64] and for their "Affection and Loyalty".[65] Then followed the request for money: "my Debts have pressed Me very much",[66] "When we last met, I asked you for a Supply, and I ask it now again with greater Instance".[67] The recent wars with the Dutch were frequently given as reasons for the need for money — Charles assured Parliament that none of the money voted for paying for the war had been diverted to any other purpose and that he had even used some of his own revenue to pay war debts. The cost of the plague and Great Fire were also cited as additional expenses. Having read such speeches on the King's behalf, Bridgeman would face Parliament with his speech, composed largely of the same formulae and urging members to "take [the King's] Debts effectually into consideration".[68] The speech often ended with an observation to the effect that "<u>there is no Distinct Interest between the King and His People, but the good of one, is the good of both</u>".[69] Charles himself might insist more peremptorily, again with particular emphasis on his need for a "Supply", and again, of course, through the mouth of his Lord Keeper,

that "it is yours and the Kingdom's Interest as well as Mine".[70]

Charles' continual need for money, together with the frequent inter-involvement of religious and political manoeuvre, is a major characteristic of the period. When Charles had sufficient funds to maintain himself and the state he would prorogue Parliament and rule alone. So the financial question became a political and constitutional one. Charles saw Louis' financial assistance as being of vital importance in his relationship with Parliament, which he saw as little more than the body which voted him and the state an adequate "Supply". That parliament also took it upon itself to debate other matters only made it the more irksome: "he did not think he was a king, as long as a company of fellows were looking into all his actions and examining his ministers as well as his accounts".[71] In the early 1670's Charles had to manipulate Council and Cabal to his own ends and the fulfilment of the Treaty of Dover, the financial promise of which he could not of course reveal. The need for funds became desperate, despite a grant of £1,200,000 in September 1671 and some money from Louis. When war was declared on Holland in 1672 as part of the agreement with France money was sought by means of the "Stop of the Exchequer", whereby the government ceased all dealing. Loans made to the government for repayment with interest were not to be repaid at the regular time but held over to finance the war.

The Stop of the Exchequer coincided with Charles' introduction of a Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended "all Penal Laws in matters Ecclesiastical" while intending the preservation of the Church of England and denying preferment to anyone "who is not exactly conformable".[72] Lord Keeper Bridgeman disapproved of both

this and the Stop of the Exchequer and, refusing to put the Seal to the Declaration of Indulgence, relinquished his office. His precise motives for his disapproval of the Declaration are not known. He may have objected on religious grounds, or he may have resented the use of religion for political ends. He may also have suspected something of the probable truth of the situation — that Charles, bearing in mind the secret clause of the Treaty of Dover, felt obliged to give Louis some evidence of his willingness to be converted, and in due course to see his country converted, to Roman Catholicism. The Declaration would give as much legal recognition to Roman Catholics as the continued existence of the Church of England would allow. Bridgeman's reaction only anticipated the massive objections of Lords and Commons, who forced Charles to withdraw the Declaration and consent to a Test Act in 1673.

Either Clifford or Ashley may have been largely responsible for the Stop of the Exchequer. Clifford became Treasurer, and Ashley, created Earl of Shaftesbury and given the more prestigious title of Lord Chancellor, replaced Bridgeman. The sessions of Parliament in 1673 mark the end of Charles' hopes for establishing any real form of absolute monarchy sanctioned by a redundant parliament. He was forced to consent to the Test Act and to make peace with Holland in 1674, thus severing his relations with France. The informal Cabal also dissolved. In 1672 Bridgeman retired to his country home at Teddington with a substantial state pension and remained there until his death in 1674.

If Bridgeman had failed to leave his own mark in political life he was by virtue of his office involved directly in the government of Britain. A more than usually forceful character was necessary

if such a man was to stand out from the aggressive and convoluted masquerade of contemporary court and political life. Bridgeman did find a place, if an ignominious one, in one critic's view of the period. After the Great Fire there was still

> one thing more
> Though its walls stand, will bring the City low'r.
> When legislators shall their trust betray,
> Hir'd for their share, to give the rest away,
> And those false men, by th'easy people sent,
> Give taxes to the King and Parliament;
> When barefac'd Villainy shan't blush to cheat,
> And 'Chequer doors shall shut up Lombard Street;
> When players come to act the part of queens
> Within the curtains and behind the scenes;
> When sodomy is the Prime Minister's sport,
> And whoring shall be the least crime at court;
> When a boy shall take his sister to his mate,
> And practise incest betwixt seven and eight;
> When no man knows in whom to put his trust,
> When e'en to rob th'Exchequer shall be just;
> When declarations lie, and every oath
> Shall be in use at court, but faith and troth;
> When two good kings shall be at Brentford town,
> And when at London there shall not one be found;
> When the seal's given to a talking fool,
> Whom wise men laugh at and whom women rule,
> A minister able only in his tongue
> To make starch'd empty speeches two hours long.[73]

Bridgeman does not seem to have been comfortable in this context. He did, however, play a major part in promoting the Comprehension Bill and his general importance is indicated by the meeting of the King and Privy Council, attended by Pepys, at Bridgeman's own Essex House. After the failure of the Comprehension Bill Bridgeman's acquaintance John Wilkins became Bishop of Chester, probably through Buckingham's influence. John Evelyn attended the consecration and gives some indication of the circles in which Bridgeman, as Lord Keeper, customarily moved:

> [14 November 1668] invited to the Consecration of that excellent Person the Deane of Rippon Dr. Wilkins, now made Bish: of Chester; it was at Elie House: Officiating The A: Bish: of Canterbury, Bish: of Durham Cousin, Bish: of Ely,

> Salisbery, Rochester & others: Dr. Tillotson preaching . . . Then we went to a most sumptuous dinner in the hall, where was the Duke of Buckingham, Judges, Secretaries of State, Lord Keeper, Counsell, Noblemen, & such an infinity of other Companie, as were honourers of this incomparable man.[74]

Bridgeman's life, like that of his Chaplain, is perhaps less obscure in fact than by virtue of the inadequacy of records.

Less still is known of Bridgeman's private life, and what information there is tends to contradict itself. His health seems to have been particularly variable. In $16\frac{68}{69}$ King and Council had to meet at Bridgeman's home because he was bedridden, but in May 1670 he married his second wife, Dorothy Craddock, by whom he was to have three children before his death at the age of 68 in 1674. Roger North says that in character Bridgeman "was timorous to an Impotence, and that not mended by his great Age" and his own clerk, Thomas Johnson, observes that he led "a Sedentary kind of Life in his Chamber".[75] Burnet, however, says that Bridgeman possessed "a courage . . . that could stand against a current".[76] Burnet, unlike North, was impressed by Bridgeman: when he received the Seal in 1667, he says, Bridgeman was "then in great esteem . . . He was a man of great integrity, and had very serious impressions of religion on his mind".[77]

A nineteenth century biographer, Edward Foss, quotes North but observes of Bridgeman that "All parties unite in acknowledging his amiable disposition, his honest principles, his piety, his moderation, and his learning", although "in his new office he did not long maintain the esteem he had previously acquired".[78] In the 1640's he "showed himself a strenuous supporter of monarchical government" while "His learning ensured him immediate employment

on the Restoration".[79] "He laboured very much to please everybody".[80] North had criticized precisely where the later Foss was to praise: "He labour'd very much to please every Body; and that is a Temper of ill Consequence in a Judge".[81] He made, in North's opinion, "a very good Common Law Judge" but "a very bad Chancellor".[82] His timorousness, as North calls it, seems to have been due in part to his unwillingness to give complete judgement on any one side of a case or cause. North speaks of "his timidous Manner of creating and judging abundance of Points, some on one side, and some on another": he "would never give all on one Side".[83] Further, "his Family was very ill qualified for that Place; his Lady being a most violent Intriguess in Business; and his Sons kept no good Decorum . . . he had not a Vigour of Mind, and Strength, to coerce the Cause of so much Disorder".[84]

In his Examen, however, North gives a closer analysis of the events leading to Bridgeman's resignation in 1672. Previously North had claimed that in relation to his duty, and to the Declaraction of Indulgence and Stop of the Exchequer, Bridgeman had merely "bogled at diverse Things required of him".[85] Later, however, North recognised Bridgeman's entitlement to an opinion of his own: on both points he was "pressed, but proved restiff".[86] He finally decided that "these Impositions were too rank for him to comport with".[87] After the Declaration and the Stop the Attorney General, Heneage Finch, and Solicitor General, Francis North, together with a number of eminent lawyers, met with Bridgeman at Essex House, where "they all agreed they were Rocks upon which they must split . . . for they lay directly in the Way, and would not be surmounted".[88] Here at least Bridgeman is allowed

integrity and some courage — a split with the government had become inevitable if he was to "stand against a current" of which he seems increasingly to have disapproved. North's analysis of the ultimate cause of Bridgeman's departure from office returns again to the maze of political manoeuvre in which Bridgeman's principles became too easily lost, or at least misinterpreted. Ashley, soon to become Earl of Shaftesbury,

> lay behind the Curtain . . . [and] . . . urged these Points to the King, as necessary to his Affairs, and practicable; and that it was only a morose Scrupulosity and Humour in his old Keeper, that made him averse to passing them; and that his Majesty was under a Necessity to displace him, and find another more complaisant in his Room . . . And what is more easy to be conceived, than that his Lordship might add, that, rather than fail, if his Majesty would command his Service in that Place, he would undertake it, and perform all, and upon the main, order Affairs, so as the Parliament, at their Meeting, should give his Majesty no Disturbance? . . . It was no new Device to shove Men out of their Places, by contriving incomportable Hardships to be put upon them, and then bespeaking the Succession for themselves, by officious undertaking to do all that was required and desired of them.[89]

Whether "timorous to an Impotence" or tending to "morose Scrupulosity" Bridgeman's character was finally less important than the situation in which he found himself. His "amiable disposition, his honest principles, his piety, his moderation, and his learning", if he was indeed possessed of these, would not prevail against the aggressive politics and devious self-seeking well summarised by North. Rather, they might be a handicap. A "man of great integrity" who "had very serious impressions of religion on his mind" might prefer to shun rather than seek recognition, even if in so doing he brought upon himself accusations of weakness deriving from his characteristic releuctance to conform to the mode and manner of the age. Here,

however, it is sufficient to have suggested something of Bridgeman's inevitable if perhaps unwilling involvement, as Lord Keeper, at the centre of state and court circles between 1667 and 1672, and his direct, if discomfited, contact with Restoration society.

3. Traherne, Bridgeman, and others.

As his Chaplain, Traherne's admiration for Bridgeman was real (CE 239) and their relationship may have been close: Bridgeman's "very serious impressions of religion" and his particular choice of the otherwise obscure Traherne suggest this. Bridgeman's patronage of his former Chaplain, Hezekiah Burton, and of Richard Cumberland, extended beyond any formal obligations. He may have held his Chaplain in special esteem. Bridgeman had been centrally involved in the negotiations for the Comprehension Bill, with the "latitudinarian" Burton. Traherne, too, was "comprehensive" (M I.xxxi), so there may have been real common interest. His work is also not without contact with that of Cumberland, dedicated to Bridgeman in 1672. Traherne suggests that he was acquainted with "high-born Souls in Courts and Palaces" (CE 260) and "admitted to the society and friendship of Great men" (CE 173). It is through Bridgeman, and while living at Essex House in the Strand, that Traherne would most readily form contacts with these "high-born Souls".

"Courts and Palaces" were terms used of all noble households, many of which were in the Strand, along the River Thames between the commercial City of London itself and the court and government centres at Whitehall and Westminster. Anthony Ashley Cooper, a member of the Cabal and Bridgeman's successor (as Lord Chancellor),

maintained an establishment at nearby Exeter House. His physician, secretary and friend, John Locke, lived there between 1667 and 1674.[90] Bridgeman had open access to the foremost of all "Courts and Palaces", Whitehall itself: he may have had his own office there.[91] Pepys suggests Bridgeman's immediate involvement with the daily life of King and court when he describes a visit to the Council Chamber: "All I observed there is the silliness of the King, playing with his dog all the while, or his codpiece, and not minding the business and what he said was mighty weak; but my Lord Keeper I observe to be a mighty able man".[92] Might Bridgeman's Chaplain sometimes accompany him to Whitehall?

This, of course, is the purest speculation. Even speculation, however, may have a value if its purpose is defined and its limitations recognised. There is a definite purpose here. In 1673 Traherne wrote decisively and destructively against the Roman Catholic Church, just when, as Burnet says, "Popery was everywhere preached against", when Milton re-engaged the religious debate in prose, when "'No Popery' became the popular cry".[93] Traherne stands in real relation to a real society — to "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20) — and significant aspects of his work are ignored if his immediate place in and relation to Restoration London are ignored. Bridgeman is a key to the charting of this relation. The overall aim is to show Traherne in relation to his own contemporary world. In Bridgeman's own life and circumstance, and the life and circumstance of others connected with his household, this contemporary world can be seen in specific terms, as a world of particular men — of Burton and Cumberland, for example. Such specific details suggest immediate contexts for Traherne, too, as

Bridgeman's Chaplain, but they only contribute to a view of Traherne in a particular, and surely relevant, context: they do not claim to be factual statements about Traherne's circle of acquaintance, but they are facts, nevertheless, facts about immediate and specific aspects of the society in which he lived, the world he shared, in some proximity it seems, with these other men. More generally, Bridgeman's whole life during his term of office as Lord Keeper, his whole relation to contemporary society, offers material for a view of Traherne's own relation to that same society in the same period. The one becomes, it even seems, almost a parable of the other.

Firstly, then, some specific facts and their speculative promise in relation to Traherne. Hezekiah Burton, already encountered as Bridgeman's former Chaplain and the author of the dedication to Bridgeman in Cumberland's De Legibus Naturae, seems to have retained some connection with the Bridgeman household after 1669. Burton was a member of Magdalene College, Cambridge, like Bridgeman (and Pepys),[94] and gained the degree of Doctor of Divinity by royal mandate, probably through Bridgeman's administration of royal patronage, in 1669. Bridgeman provided him with a Chaplaincy and prebendary stall at Norwich, but Burton remained in London and became minister of St. George's, Southwark. Wood referred to him as "that great trimmer and latitudinarian",[95] which is interesting in relation to the description of Traherne as himself "a very comprehensive Soul" (M I.xxxi), and in relation to Bridgeman's "very serious impressions of religion". The Comprehension Bill, Burton's latitudinarianism and Traherne's comprehensiveness suggest the possibility of common concerns. Burton's friends, John Tillotson

and Edward Stillingfleet, advocated a tolerant latitudinarianism contemporary with that of the Cambridge Platonists.[96] Tillotson was to edit Burton's Discourses in 1684, and it is through Tillotson that Burton may have had close acquaintance with the ubiquitous John Wilkins, who had also been involved in the 1668 Comprehension Bill negotiations.[97] Sir Matthew Hale, a colleague of Sir Orlando Bridgeman, was also a friend of Tillotson and Stillingfleet, as of John Wilkins and Seth Ward, and of Isaac Barrow. Hale's writings included legal and scientific treatises, and also some Contemplations Moral and Divine (1676), much admired by Tillotson and Wilkins.[98] Traherne annotated a sermon by Isaac Barrow in 1671 in his Commonplace Book, where he also referred to "Learned Stillingfleet".[99] Burton, Cumberland, Hale, Wilkins, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Barrow, Ward — and perhaps Henry More of the Cambridge Platonists — describe circles of acquaintance and common interest around the Bridgeman household.

The Comprehension Bill suggests a further interesting possibility. Bridgeman, Buckingham and Wilkins, the "men of comprehension" who promoted the Bill, seem to have been associated in Burnet's mind with Andrew Marvell. Marvell's The Rehearsal Transpros'd (1672; The Second Part, 1673)[100] was a polemical plea for comprehension in the form of an attack on Samuel Parker, as Burnet tells:

> [Parker] was attcked by the liveliest droll of the age [i.e. Marvell], who writ in a burlesque strain, but with so peculiar and so entertaining a conduct that, from the King down to the tradesman, his books were read with great pleasure. . . . [The] author of the Rehearsal Transpros'd had all the men of wit . . . on his side. But what advantages soever the men of comprehension might have in any other respect,

> the majority of the house of commons was so possessed against them, that when it was known in a succeeding session, that a bill was to be offerred to the house for that end, a very extraordinary vote passed, that no bill to that purpose should be received.[101]

Burnet seems to have confused events of 1668 and 1672, but he does suggest a continuity of interest between the promoters of the 1668 Comprehension Bill and The Rehearsal Transpros'd. This, he said, was extremely popular, and shared something in common with the 1668 proposals. Marvell had been a government servant, and mentions Bridgeman incidentally in The Rehearsal Transpros'd and in his letters.[102] Buckingham, a close friend of the King, was associated with the Comprehension Bill and with Bridgeman and Wilkins (for whom Buckingham obtained the Bishopric of Chester), and it was from the play The Rehearsal, of which Buckingham was at least part author, that Marvell took his title.[103] Marvell had been involved in the Commons campaign against Clarendon in 1667, which would suggest involvement with Buckingham's supporters.[104] Buckingham's wife was the Jane Fairfax who had been Marvell's pupil at Nun Appleton House in 1650 to 1652. How well did Marvell know Buckingham, and how directly did he intend the reference to The Rehearsal in The Rehearsal Transpros'd? By the very nature of their place and work in the court and government Buckingham and Bridgeman were closely associated, regardless of their particular connection with the negotiations for the Comprehension Bill (itself, in part, an outcome of the 1667 campaign against Clarendon). Marvell's apparent proximity to, and possible endorsement of, the Bill promoted by Traherne's patron should at least be noted.

So much for speculative interest. It cannot be too strongly

emphasized that the point of this exercise is not to suggest that Traherne actually knew Locke, Wilkins or Marvell, for example. Rather, the aim is simply to show that he was genuinely a contemporary of such men, that they all lived and wrote in the same city at the same time, that they shared a common cultural inheritance and milieu. These are facts which can help the reader of Traherne's work to an appreciation of the historical situation from which the writing issues and in relation to which it stands as a reflection of "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20). The facts as quoted here are intended to serve this, and only this, purpose.

And more generally? "No reader of the 'Select Meditations' could ever conceive of calling this author a 'poet of felicity'.[105] There was always, surely, a historical irony in the misnomer. The "poet of felicity" wrote in Restoration London:

> He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
> The brazen Throat of Warr had ceast to roar,
> All now was turn'd to jollitie and game,
> To luxurie and riot, feast and dance,
> Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
> Rape or Adulterie, where passing faire
> Allurd them; thence from Cups to civil Broiles.
> At length a Reverend Sire among them came,
> And of thir doings great dislike declar'd,
> And testifi'd against thir wayes; hee oft
> Frequented thir Assemblies, whereso met,
> Triumphs or Festivals, and to them preachd
> Conversion and Repentance, as to Souls
> In Prison under Judgements imminent:
> But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas'd
> Contending, and remov'd his Tents farr off.[106]

Traherne, however, felt himself "a concerned person in all Transactions . . . ever present with all Affairs" (C IV.69). He was "concerned in all the world" (C III.23).

The immediate contemporary relevance of Roman Forgeries is

clear. But what of Bridgeman's career? That career was immediately related to the whole government of the nation, in which Bridgeman was crucially involved. The Declaration of Indulgence and the Stop of the Exchequer provoked his resignation. These measures were the culminating points of a second decisive phase in Charles II's reign, from the fall of Clarendon in 1667 to the Test Act of 1673. They issue from major contemporary preoccupations: the religious problem and state finance. These problems relate to and expose the whole political fabric of the period: the confrontation of a history of religious civil war; the whole problem of "Popery" and its implications; Charles' deals with Louis XIV, his independence of parliament and possible absolutist ambitions; Britain's relations with France and Holland, her naval supremacy and eager competition for foreign and colonial trade. The two causes of Bridgeman's resignation are focal and representative points, his career an abstract of the history of the period. His relation to that history was an uncomfortable and unhappy one. A "man of great integrity", with "his amiable disposition, his honest principles, his piety, his moderation, and his learning", he was yet the "talking fool" to the "false men", the "players . . . Within the curtains and behind the scenes".[107] He lived amid "barefac'd Villainy", "When no man knows in whom to put his trust / . . . and every oath / Shall be in use at court, but faith and troth".[108] This was a world recognisable, perhaps, as that of Charles II, Rochester, Hobbes, Pepys, or Wycherley, but not as that of any "poet of felicity". It was a world in which the ~~aging~~ ageing Milton saw "Popery" as a cause of the "Pride, Luxury, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Cursing, Swearing, bold and open Atheism every where

abounding".[109] It was "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20) in which Traherne lived and wrote.

4. Traherne and Restoration society

Traherne's writing seeks "the Gentle Ways of Peace and Lov" (C I.4) but knows that it must turn away from "the Nois of Bloody Wars, and the Dethroning of Kings" (C I.4). It contains and seeks to transcend an awareness of a definite historical situation. "Save this nation . . . let Thy Citties prosper, our villages flourish . . . Soften our King's Heart, Teach our Senator's Wisdom" (SM I.82). The Civil Wars and the death of "King Charles the Martyr" (C I.61) are remembered by the man who grew up in the once besieged city of Hereford and ended his life in Restoration London. He offers his "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) and the pursuit of Felicity as "hard lessons, in a pervers and Retrograde World to be practiced" (C IV.54): "we are here upon Earth Turmoiled with Cares and often Shaken with Winds and by Disturbances distracted" (C II.89). Traherne idealises what he calls the world of nature and the riches of light, created by God (C I.33), in conscious opposition to the world of invention and the riches of darkness, created by men (C I.33). Thus "the World is both a Paradice and a Prison" (C I.36). Traherne, eager for the "hard lessons" that will bring him to the Enjoyment of Felicity in a true "Paradice", sees his way towards this only after escape from a "Prison".

"A Comfortless Wilderness full of Thorns the World was, or wors: a Waste Place covered with Idleness and Play, and Shops and Markets and Taverns" (C III.14). Thus, as a boy, Traherne felt the effects of his "Apostacy" and recognised one true aspect of the

world, the world of "Envy, Rapine, Bloodshed, Complaint, and Malice" (C I.4), the "Prison" from which he later sought to escape by means of the "Highest Reason" (C III.2). In this prison men "invented Scarce and Rare, Insufficient, Hard to be Gotten, litle, movable and useless Treasures" (C I.33) — the "Riches of Invention", "Gold Silver Houses Lands Clothes &c" (C III.9) — which they "violently Persue . . . as if they were the most Necessary and Excellent Things in the whole World" (C I.33). In their pursuit of the riches of darkness men ignore the riches of light, of nature, and are "Alienated" (C III.7) from their natural inheritance as heirs of the world by an "Impetuous Torrent of Wrong Desires" (C III.7) so that "Trades, Taverns, Markets, Houses, Money, Coachs, Clothes . . . cover the face of Nature" (SM II.18). They have

> let in Broyls and Dissatisfactions into the World, and are ready to Eat and Devour one another. Particular and feeble Interests, fals Properties, Insatiable Longings, fraud, Emulation, Murmuring and Dissension being evry where seen, Theft and Pride and Danger and cousenage envy and contention Drowning the Peace and Beauty of Nature . . . the Prospect of their Ugly Errors is able to turn ones Stomach: they are so Hideous and Deformed. (C I.33)

Traherne is himself like the man who "must like a GOD, bring Light out of Darkness, and Order out of Confusion" (C IV.21). He must produce the potential paradise from within the prison that men habitually accept as a condition of their existence in the world. The riches of nature must be known and used over and against the riches of invention. The need is the more desperate as the "Customs and maners of Men" (C III.7) threaten even his own integrity: "Men being mistaken in the Nature of Felicity, and we by a strong

inclination prone to pleas them, follow a Multitude to do evil" (C IV.44).

The riches of invention, though, can offer some potential for Felicity. A "Magnificent or Noble Dining Room", with its "Gold and State and Carved Imagery", was "Dead" and Traherne "departed Dissatisfied" — but only until he "saw it full of Lords and Ladies and Musick and Dancing" (C III.22). "Men and Women" — creators of the riches of invention — can themselves be "a Principal Part of our True Felicity" (C III.22). Just as the student of Felicity should "be all Life and Mettle and Vigor and Lov to evry Thing" (C II.68) so the actual life of real people turns the "Dead" objects of invention into real treasures. The ambivalence of Traherne's relation to the life of "Men and Women" is real. There can be no simple contrast between light and darkness, nature and invention. "We lov to be Rich" in a material as well as a spiritual sense (C II.57): "the Dust of the Streets were as precious as Gold" (C I.25). It is very easy to "follow a Multitude to do evil". It is even rather exciting. Material self-aggrandizement is an image of man's natural and infinite Capacity: "It is the Nobility of Mans Soul that He is Insatiable . . . men get one Hundred Pound a year that they may get another; and having two covet Eight, and there is no End of all their Labour; because the Desire of their Soul is Insatiable" (C I.22). Traherne condemns the riches of invention but sometimes seems to be secretly attracted by pursuit of them, and by their apparent potential for Felicity. "Men and Women", "Lords and Ladies" celebrate their own insatiable appetite against a background of material opulence. They provide an image of Felicity, and bring "Dead Things" (C I.100) to life. The "Ey of Reason" (C I.25)

is ready to be dazzled by the spectacle: he has, it seems, "a strong inclination" to follow their example, to celebrate a Felicity based less exclusively on the riches of nature alone.

Traherne, then, seems to have been impressed, overawed perhaps, by the "Gold . . . Bonds . . . Affairs . . . Houses, Liberties, and Lands" that the "Great Men" of his acquaintance entrusted to him (CE 200). If he spoke of "the Lov of Mony which is the Root of all Evil" (C II.98) he nevertheless recognised the temptations of material prosperity and saw the ease with which, "mistaken in the Nature of Felicity", men could place their hope in the pursuit of the riches of invention. In the real "Enjoyment of the World", of the riches of nature, men should "so Esteem it, that evry thing in it, is more your Treasure, then a Kings Exchequer full of Gold and Silver" (C I.25). "Gold and Silver", however, riches of invention, are still treasurable even if they are transcended by true Enjoyment of the riches of nature. Only in the full Enjoyment of the ultimate Felicity will "all Covetousness and Ambition" be "satisfied" (C I.24). Meanwhile "Covetousness and Ambition" must be recognised and accommodated within "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20).

The years Traherne spent in London, from 1669 until 1674, were the early years of what has since been called a "Commercial Revolution".[110] London was a very prosperous city, a manufacturing and trading capital and the urban focus of commercial interests greatly out of proportion to those found elsewhere in a predominently rural Britain. This must have been noticeable to a young clergyman like Traherne, "being removed out of the Country" to his first appointment in London (M I.xxxii). The avid commercial

interests of the City were not the exclusive province of a class of merchants, however. Court and government, the "high-born Souls in Courts and Palaces", were closely involved with and dependent upon these interests. A quarter of the shares of the Royal African Company, for example, were owned by the aristocracy, and its designation as "Royal" identifies it, and the several other Royal Companies, with government policy. The dominant part played by foreign and naval affairs in the period 1667 to 1674, especially the question of Britain's relationships with France and Holland, stems from concern for trade. Britain sought and actively pursued an unlimited expansion of her world trade and national wealth. "What we want is more of the trade the Dutch now have", remarked Albemarle.[111] Britain's commercial prosperity was strained in the 1660's by the expenses of the plague and the Great Fire, and by the wars against the Dutch, but war was for trade and in the 1670's trade and prosperity were escalating. "Foreign contemporaries were inclined to think that the difference between the warmongering of the English and of the others was that the English war represented a material objective broader than mere dynasticism, and one planned with a more cunning regard to the interests of His Majesty's subjects. They may have been right".[112] War and trade were complementary, and both were involved in Britain's ambitions for power and profit. Her great assets were the navy and merchant fleet. Shipping more than doubled between 1660 and 1668, and about half of the total was controlled by London merchants.[113] One quarter of the population of London depended on the sea for a living. The growth of the Joint Stock Companies is a measure of immense commercial and colonial expansion.[114] When,

in 1666, Sir Christopher Wren sketched a plan for the rebuilding of the city after the Great Fire he suggested that the Royal Exchange should be rebuilt on its old site but this time surrounded by a wide forum. It would be, he said, "the Nave or Center of the Town, from whence . . . Streets as so many Rays, should proceed to all principal Parts of the City".[115] His plan was not adopted (it raised too many problems of property ownership and compensation) but it would have been appropriate had the Royal Exchange achieved so physically a dominant position in the commercial city. Material power and profit can be seen as dominant ambitions, promoted and fostered by government policy, involving closely a large proportion of the population of London. The increasing wealth and prosperity of Britain, and the hope of her further expansion and domination abroad, issued from the London known to Bridgeman's household and was promoted by the government of which Bridgeman was a prominent member.

This prosperity can be associated with a feeling of confidence and optimism based upon a powerful sense of the insatiable ambition of men. In Annus Mirabilis: The Year of Wonders, 1666 John Dryden gives expression to this. Contemporary London will be "a wonder to all Years and Ages", he asserts.[116] The wonder, however, is produced from disaster — the Great Fire and the Dutch wars — and it is the "vigour" of the people of London, who are able "to be struck down and to triumph", that is celebrated: "You are now a Phoenix in her ashes . . . I am to conclude that your sufferings are at an end; and . . . one part of my Poem has not been more an History of your destruction, then the other a Prophecy of your restoration".[117] London will not only be restored but improved,

"an immortal Monument" built on its own ruins, "a wonder to all Years and Ages".[118] In Annus Mirabilis Dryden gives expression to an optimism no less overweening than that commonly seen as almost unique to Traherne.

It is easily assumed that the optimism of Traherne's "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) is based on a thorough ignorance or refusal of "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20). The "hard lessons" of the philosophy are offered, however, in the face of real and recognised difficulties in the "pervers and retrograde world" of men (C IV.54). "Here . . . is a Place of Trial" (C IV.60) where "Practical Happiness" (C IV.1) is a genuine problem. Dryden's optimistic affirmations are made in the face of disastrous events: he gives a prophecy of "restoration" in a history of destruction. This restoration, Dryden suggests, to the real creation of a paradise on earth, in London, "a wonder to all Years and Ages". There was a genuine contemporary consensus about this. In his Memoirs, Sir John Reresby says of the Great Fire that "the dreadfull affects of it were not soe strange as the rebuilding was of this great citty, which, by reason of the Kings and Parlaments care . . . and the great wealth and opolency of the citty itselfe, was rebuilded most stately with brick (the greatest part being nothing before but lath and lime) in four or five years time".[119] The actual rebuilding of the city was no more than half begun by 1671, "four or five years" after the Great Fire, and work on Wren's new St. Paul's Cathedral, the completion of which in 1711 marks the real end of the restoration of the city, did not begin until 1675. Reresby has given, whether deliberately or not, a misrepresentation of the facts, inspired, it must seem, by his

faith in "the great wealth and opolency of the citty itselfe". Dryden's predictions are also a form of this faith in material prosperity. From within this faith issue assertions of no less confidence in the destiny of man than those of Traherne. Man may truly, and in this world, create a paradise of a prison. By his rare Capacity, by virtue of his "vigour" and his material and spiritual wealth, he can "be struck down and . . . triumph": he will be, "Phoenix-like", "a wonder to all Years and Ages".

There is, however, a dual aspect to this feeling. The "World is both a Paradice and a Prison" (C I.36). Charles II's Restoration Court — in which Bridgeman had a part — reflects a dual aspect of material prosperity and ambition. In the poetry of Rochester, for example, a cynical frivolity and attempts at necessary self-aggrandizement in the face of fits of depression and complete loss of confidence reflect the frustration of more genuine needs beneath a wilful libertinism and material opulence. Thus, it might be said, men "invent Ways to make them selvs Miserable in the Presence of Riches" (C I.32). Rochester, like Charles himself, had known Thomas Hobbes when in exile in Paris, and it is in the writings of Hobbes that many characteristics of Restoration society can be seen to be anticipated and delineated. It has been said that the theories of Hobbes "were to find their most complete vindication in Restoration England".[120] It is true, for example, that Charles had been restored on the terms recommended in Leviathan (1651) — unconditionally, protected by a special treason act, and with absolute control over the armed forces — but the historical fact, the suggestion that there may have been some direct link between Hobbes' theories and a perhaps partially

conscious realisation of them, is less relevant here than a sense of Hobbes as prophet and portrayer of attitudes and atmosphere in the period.

Hobbes' doctrines were based on local observation of actual behaviour: they claim to be derived "from true principles by evident connection" and to have no concern with the abstract principles of moral philosophers, which are "the causes of all contentions and bloodsheds".[121] The Preface to Hobbes' English version of De Cive (Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society, 1651)[122] provides a concise guide to his reasoning and methods as these concern the behaviour of men in a "state of nature" and in "civil society". To Hobbes "the state of men without civil society, which state we may properly call the state of nature, is nothing else but a mere war of all against all; and in that war all men have equal right unto all things".[123] Absolute power, preferably monarchy, established by "compact", is the only adequate mediation for the absolute self-seeking of men. In a state of nature and by natural law and natural right self-preservation is absolute: Hobbes' work focusses on the necessity and possible means of reconciling the absolute right of self-preservation with political obligation. This reconciliation is best accomplished, he thought, under a monarchy. Under the "compact" necessary to monarchy the natural law will be restrained to allow the tolerable function of a civil society. The "war of all against all" will be reduced in its consequences but not abolished as a fact of human nature — it is only "so learned a piece of folly" to think that men might "not . . . desire the preservation of that by which they are preserved".[124] Self-preservation, the cause of the

war of all against all, remains absolute. Hobbes' conclusions are based, he says, on deduction from observation: "men travel not without their swords for their defences; neither sleep they without shutting their doors against their fellow subjects, but also their trunks and coffers for fear of domestics. Can men give a clearer testimony of the distrust they have each of other, and all of all?"[125]

It was the idea of the "war of all against all" that was to gain the most contemporary currency of Hobbes' doctrines. Hobbes was popular. The printing of Leviathan was restricted, but when Pepys bought a copy he found it "mightily called for" and had to pay twenty-four shillings instead of the eight shillings originally asked.[126] In 1673 Dryden was attacked in print for having represented characters in The Conquest of Granada as being "in a Hobbian state of war".[127] John Bramhall spoke of "Hobbian principles" in 1658.[128] "Hobbians" were political rationalists who claimed that God had left man to establish their political societies arbitrarily and independently of the divine will, "according to the principles of . . . self-preservation".[129] Self-preservation was a "Hobbian" principle, restrained but retained in civil society. In 1673, John Eachard found many "sturdy, resolved practicants of Hobbianism" in contemporary London; Thomas Tenison thought that "there is certainly no man who hath any share of the Curiosity of this present Age who is unacquainted with [Hobbes'] Name and Doctrine".[130] Modern historians have concluded that the "alarming and increasing phenomenon of 'Hobbism'" reflects the "serious ideological purchase" of his doctrines in Restoration society: Hobbes "gave the ablest and most influential presentation

to a point of view which was gaining increasingly in fashionable acceptance and ideological importance".[131] "The society itself gave birth to Hobbist ideas, in others as well as Hobbes".[132]

The "serious ideological purchase" of Hobbes' doctrines is further reflected in the number of writers who, publishing some fifty years or even a century after Leviathan appeared, included in their work some response or reply to Hobbes. The relevance of his views and doctrines to certain aspects of experienced and social life were powerfully and generally felt. Richard Cumberland's De Legibus Naturae (1672), dedicated to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, is conceived, in part, as a refutation of Hobbes' doctrines. In Christian Ethicks Traherne explicitly opposes himself to Hobbes (CE 261). Hobbist doctrines were readily generalised, expanded and extended, to frame a view of life as a state of war among self-seeking individualists in a world ravaged by their aggressive refusal to recognize the rights of others. The generalisation has continued down to the present day: "Hobbes has rightly been seen as the high priest of competitive individualism".[133]

Traherne was not unaware of a certain truth to experience in Hobbist attitudes. He, writing only twenty years after Leviathan was published, could see ways in which, in its pursuit of material wealth, the "Christian World" is a "Salvage Nation", "absurdly Barbarous": it exceeds "Rude and Barbarous Indians" in "Barbarous Opinions and Most Monstrous Apprehensions" (C III.12). "GOD hath placed our Trial in sharp and bitter Atchievements" (CE 191). "Men are generally Evil, deformed and blind, erroneous, perverse and foolish, poor and miserable: . . . all the Honour which they generally give is irrational and feigned" (CE 230). He observes

that "our present Estate" is one of "Labour" not "Reward", of "Trial" not "Fruition": men must "Toyl, and Sweat, and travail hard, for the promised Wages" and "we must expect some Blows" (CE 19). His answer to this perceived aspect of life is emphasis and concentration on the individual self, the realisation of individual Capacity, not in the material terms of Hobbes but in a "spiritual" sense, launching mortal man towards his ultimate Platonic achievement of God-likeness. Although, as Traherne insists, "The Maner is in every thing of the greatest Concernment" (C III.38), so that "material" apprehensions are as evil as "spiritual" ones are good, Traherne's pursuit of Felicity, and his encouragement to others to seek their own fulfilment, has something in common with the programme of self-aggrandizement inspired by and reflected in the writing of Hobbes. Although, in Traherne's opinion, the author of "that arrogant Leviathan" made "a great mistake . . . so far to imprison our love to our selves, as to make it inconsistent with Charity towards others" (CE 261), Traherne himself says that "self Lov is the Basis of all Lov" (C IV.55). While "No man loves, but he loves another more than Himself" (C IV.56) the basis of argument in Traherne and Hobbes is the same of the superstructure is very different.

Or is it very different? Two quotations from Hobbes, in which he outlines the "felicity" men can achieve by action issuing from self-love, may suggest otherwise:

> Continuall successe in obtaining those things which a man from time to time desireth, that is to say, continuall prospering, is that men call FELICITY; I mean Felicity of this Life. For there is no such thing as perpetuall Tranquillity of mind, while we live here; because Life it selfe

> is but Motion, and can never be without Desire, nor without Feare, no more than without Sense. What kind of Felicity God hath ordained to them that devoutly honour him, a man shall no sooner know, then enjoy.[134]
>
> Felicity is a continuall progresse of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the later. The cause whereof is, That the object of mans desire, is not to enjoy once onely, and for one instant of time; but to assure for ever, the way of his future desire.[135]

"The Maner is in evry thing of the greatest Concernment": "prosperity" in Hobbes carries a more material emphasis than in Traherne's "spiritual" concern for an eternal Felicity (but compare Hobbes' "not to enjoy once onely . . . "). Elsewhere, however, Traherne remarks that "All Life consists in Motion and Change. The pleasure of Acquiring is oftentimes as great, and perhaps alwaies greater than that of Enjoying" (CE 211). "The pleasure of Acquiring" could provoke an emphasis on material ambition parallel in Traherne's writing to that on spiritual ambition. A remarkable identity between the terms of Hobbes and Traherne must be noted: both recognise, centrally and crucially, a need to enjoy felicity in a life that is all motion and change.

A very great deal depends on the sometimes tenuous distinction between the material and spiritual "Maner". Traherne would see Hobbes' thought as having relevance only to the world of invention, while his own belongs to that of nature. "Gold Silver Houses Lands Clothes &c . . . are indeed the Riches of Invention . . . The Riches of Nature are our Souls and Bodies, with all their Faculties Sences and Endowments" (C III.9). Can the two be so separate? It is only the "Maner" of apprehension and appreciation which makes "the World

. . . both a Paradice and a Prison to different Persons" (C I.36; see C III.68). Without a notion of spiritual apprehension and Felicity the material world becomes for Traherne a Hobbist desert: "Being Swallowed up therfore in the Miserable Gulph of idle talk and worthless vanities, thenceforth I lived among Shadows, like a Prodigal Son feeding upon Husks with Swine. A Comfortless Wilderness the World was, or wors: a Waste Place covered with Idleness and Play, and Shops and Markets and Taverns" (C III.14). When the spiritual manner lapses the riches of nature are lost and the riches of invention break in and force a harsh accommodation to "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20). The material world, the acquisitive Hobbist world of invention and self-aggrandizement, is recognised, if recognised, finally, only to be denied.

Within the world of nature, however, and in terms of the spiritual "Maner", there are further parallels with the material advance and ambition of Hobbes and the society that can be seen to take colour from him. "It is the Nobility of Mans Soul that He is Insatiable" (C I.22), Traherne says: "You must Want like a GOD, that you may be Satisfied like GOD" (C I.44). He celebrates both "The Noble Inclination wherby Man thirsteth after Riches and Dominion" (C I.23) and "the Avaricious Humor . . . Whereby we refer all unto our selvs and naturaly desire to hav all alone in our Private Possession, and to be the alone and single End of all Things" (C II.79). "Riches and Pleasures may be infinite" (CE 67); "all the World is yours" (C I.16). Traherne's ambition, based on his own version of self-love is, in its eager and often overweening intensity, a spiritual parallel of Hobbist materialism; and always underlying the paradise perceived in the spiritual manner is the

material prison of the world of invention.

It is a potent awareness of the influence of material objects and material wealth, of the riches of invention and man's pursuit of them, that forces Traherne back on the "Pure and Virgin Apprehensions" of his infancy as a resource to be used against and in contrast to "Barbarous Inventions", the "enemies to all Pure and True Apprehensions" (C III.13). Thus "it is requisit that we should be as very Strangers to the Thoughts Customs and Opinions of men in this World as if we were but little Children" (C III.5). The origins of Traherne's pursuit of Felicity through the "Ey of Reason" (C I.25), the recovery of the apprehensions of the "Infant-Ey" (M II.86-87) on the principles of the "Highest Reason" (C III.2), are in a reaction or rebellion against the Hobbist "Customs and maners of Men" which "ecclypsed" the pure apprehensions of his childhood and "alienated" him from a true and natural inheritance:

> If you ask me how it was ecclypsed? Truly by the Customs and maners of Men, which like Contrary Winds blew it out: by an innumerable company of other Objects, rude vulgar and Worthless Things that like so many loads of Earth and Dung did over whelm and Bury it: by the Impetuous Torrent of Wrong Desires in all others whom I saw or knew that carried me away and alienated me from it: by a Whole Sea of other Matters and Concernments that Covered and Drowned it . . . All Mens thoughts and Words were about other Matters . . . I was little and reverenced their Authority; I was weak, and easily guided by their Example: Ambitious also, and Desirous to approve my self unto them. . . . My Thoughts . . . were blotted out.
> (C III.7)

The reaction is itself Hobbist to the extent that it is provoked and promoted by "self Lov" (C IV.55), albeit that self-love is conceived not in individualist terms but rather as a means of

returning to a state of mutual participation, on the part of all men, in a primal unity in which self-love and a form of social love or charity become identical. The power and interest of Traherne's writing and thought, in his avid search for the Felicity he once felt to be the universal inheritance of innocent man may in part be due to the thoroughness and proximity with which he senses the alienating "Customs and maners of Men" in society, the aggressive and materially concerned society of his day. He wanted to teach "Those Pure and Virgin Apprehensions" "by Experience", for they are "unattainable by Book" (C III.1). The pursuit of Felicity does not draw on a complete, preconceived and preconstituted ("mystic" or "meditative") discipline, the obedience to which will bring the initiate to his spiritual reward. The pursuit of Felicity as an ideal resulted from a deliberate reaction against the common behaviour, the "Customs and maners", of men in society, their "Ambitions, Trades, Luxuries, inordinat Affections, Casual and Accidental Riches" (C III.5). Once corrupted, and "made to learn the Dirty Devices of this World" (C III.3), the student of Felicity sought once again a pure and natural inheritance formerly Enjoyed in intuitive innocence, still sensed, and one day perhaps regained through the exercise of the "Highest Reason" (C III.2).

Traherne's reaction against an awareness of the accustomed behaviour of men in society, his rejection of material values, launches, is in part responsible for, his pursuit of spiritual ones. His recognition of a material influence working against his spiritual ambition but at once in part inspiring it is present in his writing. The society he lived in and reacted immediately against,

the society of Restoration London, is particularly marked in its embodiment of those values he rejected. This is reflected positively as well as negatively in his work. For, while rejecting the riches of invention pursued by other men, he finds material wealth secretly attractive and is himself ambitious and acquisitive as regards spiritual apprehension and possession of the riches of nature. So, while it is possible to see a negative recognition of the values of Restoration society in his rejection of those values, it is also possible to see a positive reflection of them in his spiritual pursuit. In spiritual terms he urges upon man a doctrine of avarice and insatiableness based on self-love that makes it possible to suggest that Hobbist ideas, the theories and practise of material self-aggrandizement, and the Restoration ideology of power and profit — even perhaps Charles II's own absolutist ambitions — were subtly transmuted in the doctrine and pursuit of Felicity."We lov to be Rich", Traherne asserts (C II.57): "It is the Glory of Man, that his Avarice is insatiable, and his Ambition infinite, that his Appetite carries him to innumerable Pleasures, and that his Curiosity is so Endless, that were he Monarch of the World, it would not satisfie his Soul" (CE 54).

CHAPTER 5

The Royal Society and Natural Philosophy, 1660-1674

In an earlier chapter it was shown how, in the Oxford of the 1650's, John Wilkins and the members of his experimental philosophy club began, in a series of informal meetings, to inquire into all manner of physical phenomena in ways which prefigure the later development of physical science. It was shown that, while some of their discoveries, particularly those of Robert Boyle, were to be incorporated into later versions of scientific progress and truth, a large proportion of the work may have been undertaken for various and often apparently "unscientific" reasons, sometimes for religious reasons. Whatever the motivation, "experimental" or "natural philosophy" seemed often to take on explicit religious connotations. While there may be some connection in this with the work of a writer like Traherne — primarily in the idea of research into and understanding of God's creation — any major consideration of a possible relationship was delayed. There was at that time little theoretical writing on the aims and more general significance of natural philosophy. This appeared only in the 1660's.

A major reason for the upsurge in theoretical debate about natural philosophy was the foundation of the Royal Society, "The Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge". This received its Royal Charter in 1662. Several members of the Oxford club formed a nucleus within the Society, although their numbers were greatly increased. John Wilkins was again a central figure.[1] In the 1660's the Society, having greater prestige, impetus and confidence than the Oxford club, began to disseminate in print

not only reports of its work but also, through the writings of its members, explanations of and apologies for its existence and for the practice of natural philosophy as a whole. Thomas Sprat's History of the Royal Society (1667) has become a classic of polemical apology, but to this can be added Abraham Cowley's original plea for the establishment of a society such as was shortly set up, A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy (1661), and three works by other members of the Society: Robert Boyle's Some Considerations Touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy (1663), Henry Power's Experimental Philosophy (1664) and Robert Hooke's Micrographia (1665). These provide a contemporary basis for discussion that offers more immediate and closer parallels with the abstract and philosophical work of a writer like Traherne. He himself affirmed that "Natural Philosophy" is "Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends" and showed an inclination to discuss the "Diligent inquisition into all Natures" (C III.44) in terms of "Humanity", "Divinity" and "Ethicks" (C III.45). Natural philosophers discussed their activites in similar terms, terms which are complemented by an interest in the practical aspects of what both Traherne and Henry Power called the "use and service" of common things (EP 164; CE 182). At first sight Traherne's interest in natural philosophy might appear to issue from a more fundamental concern with a particular "religious" view of nature. So, it might be suggested, the natural philosophers' interest in religion issues from their own more fundamental concern with a particular "scientific" view. A closer examination of the relevant texts will show the actual relationship to be more complex than this abstraction suggests. It will also suggest that the relation between

"religion" and "science" was far less well defined than might be thought. In the specific context of Restoration London apparently dissimilar forms of discourse can be seen to evince common concerns. For debate about natural philosophy, and the activities of the Royal Society in general, are of interest in relation not only to Traherne's writing but also to the life of London as a whole at the time when Traherne was resident there.

The Royal Society formed a major intellectual focus in Restoration London. With the King as its patron (Charles II maintained his own laboratory at Whitehall) the Society was supported by a more than representative selection of the most eminent men of the time. It also expresses and represents, often consciously, the forward looking optimism that in part characterizes the age, permeating all forms of cultural activity. As Dryden asked rhetorically in Of Dramatick Poesie (1668): "Is it not evident, in these last hundred years (when the Study of Philosophy has been the business of all the Virtuosi in Christendome) that almost a new Nature has been reveal'd to us?".[2] Members of the Society were impressed, and expected other people to be impressed, by the achievements and ideology of the Society as these directly reflected what was consciously felt to be a new and highly developed awareness of the greater wonder and glory of God's creation. This was seen in a new and more wonderful light as a result not only of experiments and observations but simply through the attitudes the Society fostered. Sprat is perhaps the best representative of this feeling, and for him, as the Society's official historian, the contemporary "Improving of Natural Knowledge" heralded not simply practical progress for the Royal Society and for Britain (great though this

was, he insisted) but a new golden age for mankind, a realised ideal both individual and universal.

Meetings of an informal group of experimental philosophers had been held at Gresham College, Bishopsgate, probably since 1645. It was there, after the Restoration, that the Royal Society was to hold its meetings. After the Great Fire in 1666, however, Gresham College was used by the Common Council and the Royal Exchange, the official buildings of which had been destroyed, and also to accommodate the Lord Mayor and other dignitaries whose official residences had been burned. The Royal Society was obliged to find another meeting place. A recently elected member, Henry Howard, later sixth Duke of Norfolk, allowed the Society to use the Norfolk family's London mansion, Arundel House in the Strand. Arundel House was in fact the neighbouring palace to Essex House, the Bridgeman household of which Traherne was a member after 1669. The first meeting of the Royal Society to be held at Arundel House was on 9 January $16\frac{66}{67}$, and meetings at Gresham College did not recommence until late in 1674 (certainly by 12 November), so throughout the period of Traherne's residence at Essex House the Royal Society met next door at Arundel House.[3] No conclusions should be drawn from this, but the proximity itself is of more than passing interest. Some views by Wenceslaus Hollar, who had himself been connected with the Norfolk family, show the juxtaposition of the two houses and their relationship to the rest of London. One view shows the prospect from the roof of Arundel House, with the roof of Essex House in the foreground, and another, from Milford Stairs, a jetty onto the River Thames between the two houses, shows the frontage of Essex House to the river.[4]

The activities of the Royal Society were on occasion anything but inconspicuous. Apart from the number of people, whether members or casual visitors, who arrived regularly for their meetings at Arundel House — an experiment on 12 December 1667, for example, "was made in a great crowd of spectators which would not admit of that exactness, which was designed" — the nature of the Society's interests occasionally required them to work outside. On 21 April 1670, for example, "Mr. HOOKE brought in his instrument to observe the motion of the sun to seconds; which was ordered to be produced again at the next meeting, and to be tried upon the leads of Arundel House, if the sun should shine", and on 7 March $16\frac{71}{72}$ "An experiment was made of the method proposed by Mr. HOOKE . . . of conveying intelligence from place to place, which was performed from Arundel-house garden to a boat lying near the shore on the other side of the Thames, by letters of a foot long and glasses [telescopes] of two feet long, the distance being about half a mile".

The activities of the Royal Society in the seven year period of its meetings at Arundel House cover a very extensive range. The human body — the heart and the blood system, the lungs and respiration — and the physical world, considered topographically, microscopically, magnetically, and in relation to the heavens, themselves examined through telescopes. The nature of motion, air, light and colours. Practical tools and mechanical gadgets; literally any specimens. The Royal Society and its members inquired into any and all phenomena observable around them.[5] A whole physical world was to be seen and known anew, more thoroughly than before. Natural philosophy had begun to re-define and promote anew man's response

to and observation of the natural world, a response and observation that might be echoed through man's whole intellectual and speculative practice; "almost a new Nature" was indeed to be "reveal'd". To reiterate particular interests that Traherne shares in common with the natural philosophers of the Royal Society — his "Thanksgivings for the Body" (M II.214-19), his idea of the "Circulation" (M II.152-54), his celebration of "Common things" (C III.53), of air (C I.34) and of the stars (C I.14; CE 72, 112), his magnetic image (C I.2) and microscopic awareness (C II.12, III.20); even his interest in "News from a foreign country" (M II.88-89) — is only further to delay study of more thorough and more important analogies that are to be found in the writings of the natural philosophers of the 1660's. For they sought to define and explain the whole of creation, benefitting not only an abstract scientific cause but a philosophical one bearing upon the whole of man's life. The immediate and practical emphases of natural philosophy sought to define the "use and service" of things, but even here "all kind of Arts Trades Mechanismes . . . pertained to felicity" (C III.36), to an ideal Good. Natural philosophy sought, for the good of all men, a thorough view of God's creation and a new insight into the whole "mysterious process of . . . divine Art" in the "great Machine of the World" (EP 193). This philosophy of nature may be examined, then, by analysis of the four texts cited above, beginning with Sprat's major History.

1. Thomas Sprat, The History of the Royal Society of London For the Improving of Natural Knowledge.

Sprat's History is the most complete guide to the aims and

ideals of the early Royal Society. As history it is inaccurate — for example in suggesting that the meetings of the Oxford experimental philosophy club in the 1650's were the first of their kind, whereas similar meetings had been held at Gresham College since 1645 — but as polemic and panegyric it offers an elaborate description of and justification for many aspects of the Society's thought and practice. It was commissioned by the Society and written by one of it members. Sprat was also a bishop, so a typical ecclesiastical viewpoint was not lacking. In Restoration London the Royal Society provided a focus for all manner of people — it was in many ways the intellectual centre of the city — and this is reflected in Sprat's History, the relevance of which claims to extend beyond the aims and attitudes of the widely associated Scoiety itself to those of the city and nation in which it had its existence. Students, academics, tradesmen, merchants, clergymen (including bishops and archbishops), army officers, naval commanders, statesmen, politicians, the gentry, nobility and aristocracy, and the King himself, were welcomed as members, "Philosophy being admitted into our Exchange, our Church, our Palaces, and our Court" (HRS 403). The Society itself thought this was right. It was part of the intention of members that the Society should recruit, and advance its cause through, a wide variety of members, typically those of high social standing and/or political influence. Sprat boasts that very few ministers and ambassadors, for example, are not members. Sprat saw the Royal Society as an epitome of all that was best in the nation, and looked continually towards national advancement in terms of natural philosophy and its practical and philosophical application. In his view, and that of

the Society, the interests of the Royal Society and the nation were one, so closely involved with the life of the nation did the Society seem to be. Ultimately, there is a millenial emphasis in the History: national interests also become the universal interests of mankind as a whole. It was this forceful and expansive ideology that helped to make the Royal Society a dominant and dominating force in many aspects of life in Restoration London.

For later commentators Sprat's History has ~~acheived~~ achieved fame, if not infamy, for his insistence on what has been supposed to be scientific truth and mathematical accuracy of statement. His history is inaccurate and his arguments are deliberately over-emphatic. His call for "a close, naked, natural way of speaking . . . bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness as they can" and his preference for the language of "Artizans, countrymen, and Merchants" to that of "Wits, or Scholars" (HRS 113) has, however, been taken seriously, and his History once stood as an example of a new "scientific" prose style. These claims have a place in the context of the book and in the ambitions of the Royal Society, but, while Sprat instructs his readers to avoid "the luxury and redundance of speech", to banish "eloquence" and reject "amplifications, digressions and swellings of style" (HRS 111, 113), his contemporary, Samuel Butler, makes an apt comment on Sprat's own style: "The Historian of Gresham Colledge, Indevors to Cry down Oratory and Declamation, while He uses nothing else".[6] It is at least possible that Sprat, the author of a deliberately polemical work, would admit the justice of Butler's remark. Natural philosophers did use "Oratory" and develop their own rhetoric, when discussing their work: it is this rhetoric

which gives their books considerable interest in relation to other writing in the period. Examples of Sprat's "Oratory" are many, but, having remarked upon the King's interest in the Royal Society and its activities, it is perhaps apt to quote here Sprat's recognition of the fact that Charles II maintained a laboratory in St. James's Park: "Saint Jameses Park may witness, that Ptolemy and Alphonso were not the only Monarchs, who observ'd the motions, and appearances of the Stars" (HRS 149). For Sprat and his fellow members the interest of the King and prominent members of the court was important to the Royal Society, a major reason for its contemporary prominence and recognition, and an immediate index of its respectability and responsibility. These could in turn be further dignified by grandiloquence, classical allusion and romantic metaphysics: King and country unite in the pursuit of natural philsophy which traces an ancestry to Ptolemy and surveys the very heavens.

Sprat's "Mathematical plainness" can also be called into question when an attempt is made to define what exactly is meant by "natural philosophy". The History seems to be about "Natural Philosophy", or sometimes "Experimental Philosophy", but the Royal Society, as indicated in the title, is said to deal in "Natural Knowledge". While the "Natural" emphasis is important, the best solution to the problem of terms is to retain "Natural Philosophy" as the over-riding concept, but to emphasize the "Philosophical" content of this by reference to another of Sprat's terms, "General Learning" (HRS 14). "Natural Philosophy", General Learning", is indeed very generalised — it can be pursued by "Philosophers, or Schollars, or Virtuosi" (HRS 26) — but the

important point, for Sprat and the Royal Society, is that it should relate, or be seen to relate, in some way more directly to nature than has previously been seen to be the case. Sprat wants to establish "the true Philosophy of Nature" (HRS 4-5) and to deal in "the solid substance of Science itself" (HRS 18) but within the broad effusion of terms and definitions there remains, in the actual practice, an element both of trial and error: there is really little more than an emphasis on the unrestricted exploration of virtually all subjects in vaguely defined "natural philosophical" terms. Sprat says that while "True Philosophy" will begin with a "scrupulous, and severe examination of particulars" and proceed by continued experiment and verification (HRS 31), the members of the Royal Society do not and should not "circumscribe their thoughts" with "any certain Art of Experimenting" (HRS 89). The Society aims "to make faithful Records, of all the Works of Nature, or Art, which can come within their reach" (HRS 61), and in the pursuit of "True Philosophy" or "the true Philosophy of Nature" they should avoid "Metaphysics" and "Cloudy Knowledge" (HRS 326). It is "philosophy" in which the Society is regularly seen to engage, however: "Philosophers, or Schollers, or Virtuosi" can all pursue a broadly defined and heterogenous natural "philosophy". Sprat's aim is to give a general indication of the Society's interests and methods, or at least their attitudes, and to recruit and/or justify as many "Philosophers, or Schollers, or Virtuosi" in the general cause of natural philosophy as possible. He speaks of his "Generall Learning" simply as "The Philosophy" (HRS 14). It is very much as a philosophy that the Royal Society's pursuit is characterized in an effective aphorism that can be seen to summarise what little

Sprat has to say (with any "Mathematical plainness" at least) in the way of a definition of his subject: "The Natural Philosopher is to begin, where the Moral ends" (HRS 33). Not the least important emphasis in that statement is that on natural philosophy as an extension and continuation of other forms of philosophy, certainly not a rejection of them. Natural philosophy is not an exclusive discipline (it is neither exclusive nor disciplined — natural philosophers should not "circumscribe their thoughts"): in many ways its essence consists in the extent to which it is the opposite of this. The natural philosophers are said to be "conversant" with "all the objects of men's thoughts: which can be nothing else, but either God, or Man, or Nature" (HRS 81). In fact Sprat's form of natural philosophy is less a new concept than a reformation of old concepts with some novel additions. It must refer to "nature" and the "natural" in the broadest sense (although it also deals in "Art"), but Sprat recalls the ancient definition of a philosopher as one "skill'd in all Divine and human things" (HRS 72). This "Divine and human" reference should be included in any discussion of natural philosophy. Sprat's natural philosopher "is to begin, where the Moral ends" and is to deal in "all the objects of men's thoughts", specifically God, Man, and Nature, in a "Divine and human" sense. As will be seen, metaphysics and religion have a place, and often a prominent place, in the thought and responsibilities of the natural philosopher.

Natural philosophy, "General Learning", is seen by Sprat to be as widespread as its objects and methods are disparate. He insists on the popularity of natural philosophy among the King and Court, and extends this to a national and international scale: "All

places and corners are now busie, and warm about this Work" (HRS 71-72), "there is a universal desire, and appetite after Knowledge" (HRS 152). A preoccupation with the "Secrets of Nature" (HRS 131), he suggests, is vital to any man of good breeding or learning. The intention to "restore the Truths, that have lain neglected" and "to push on those, which are already known, to more various uses" acquires a prophetic emphasis: natural philosophy will "make the way more passable, to what remains unreveal'd" (HRS 61). "We are to overcome the mysteries of all the Works of Nature" (HRS 64). In the context of the religious relevance of natural philosophy the attempt to "overcome the mysteries of all the Works of Nature", to understand and appreciate the works of God the creator, becomes a duty for all believing men.

The dual notion of duty to God and the advancement of mankind is fundamental to Sprat's argument. He regards the Royal Society and its natural philosophy as being of vital importance to what is conceived of as man's destiny in a universal sense. In a section on "The Restoration of Learning" Sprat asserts that the age of the formation of the Royal Society is the third "great age of the flourishing of Learning", Greece and Rome in ancient times representing the other two great periods. Sprat surveys previous philosophical achievements to make this clear — "The Philosophy of the Arabians", for example. Contemporary events and philosophical developments are seen by Sprat in the broadest and most exalted terms. His theme of the public involvement with and usefulness of natural philosophy takes on two aspects, nationalist and universal. Firstly, the members of the Royal Society will set "an infallible course to make England the glory of the Western world" (HRS 79).

Nature, Sprat implies, is more inclined to reveal her secrets to Englishmen (HRS 113). London is the best centre for the "Universal Intelligence" that is necessary to "Universal Philosophy" (HRS 82). Nor does Sprat ignore the reason for this: trade. He is well aware that Britain's naval strength had more than trebled in twenty years, and he observes of contemporary England that "the gain of Trade is become great enough to overbalance all other strength" (HRS 408), seeing this as "the best means, not only to inrich particular Merchants but to enlarge their Empire" (HRS 408). Commerce is relevant to the practical aspects of natural philosophy, which will benefit trade by making it more efficient, while the "Improvement of Trades, the advancement of Manufactures" (HRS 436) — all the wealth, prosperity and opulence of this aspect of Restoration London — contribute to the good and advancement of natural philosophy. Sprat sees this as being to a certain extent directly linked with commerce and trading interests, not only by sharing practical interests and benefits: he draws attention to the connection between the Royal Society and the Royal Companies. Typically, Sprat sees "Mastery of Commerce" (HRS 423) as leading to the greatest possible good — in the prophetic sense previously noted — and the sharing of Royal Charters by the Royal Society and Royal Companies may be seen to indicate not only their mutual interests but the whole Restoration concept of Britain as a leading world power, flourishing in all senses and, through the wealth gained through "Mastery of Commerce", realising predictions of a new golden age of civilisation.

Secondly, there is a universal aspect to the natural philosophy practised by members of the Royal Society. They seek

"to make all their Labours unite for the service of man-kind" (HRS 76). "So neer is Mankind to its happiness" (HRS 437) in this "Learned and Inquisitive Age" (HRS 1) that the pursuit of natural philosophy fostered by the Royal Society will bring about the dawn of a millenium:

> While this Halcyon knowledge is breeding all Tempests will cease: the oppositions and contentious wranglings of Science falsly so call'd will soon vanish away: the peacable calmness of mens Judgements will have admirable influence in their Manners; the sincerity of their Understandings will appear in their Actions; their Opinions will be less violent and dogmatical, but more certain; they will only be Gods one to another, and not Wolves.
> (HRS 437-38)

It is in such passages that the philosophical element in Sprat's work becomes dominant, for this represents for him the fulfilment of the philosophical aspect of natural philosophy. The learning promoted by the Royal Society is offered as a means to the fulfilment of the potential of all men — they will be "Gods one to another" — and as a prospect for the realisation not only of a golden age of learning but of universal peace and amity in millenial terms, the realisation of God's kingdom on earth.

That realisation is not only a millenial hope, however. As was suggested, the experiments and researches of natural philosophy are regarded by Sprat and the Royal Society as a religious duty, in the sense that they represent man's discovery and appreciation of God's works. This is a major theme in the History: "the contemplation of God's visible Works, and such easy and rational Arguments" is "Next to the succor of divine Power . . . the most probable way to preserve the Christian Faith among us" (HRS 375). The world —

nature, the whole of creation, God's kingdom — could be examined and discovered anew, in new terms and by direct experience and observation, and would appear more wonderful than before. The more man knows and understands about God's creation the more wonderful it will appear and the more truly grateful man will become: "he will be led to admire the wonderful contrivance of the Creation; and to apply, and to direct his praises aright: which no doubt when they are offer'd up to Heven, from the mouth of one who has well studied what he commends, will be more suitable to the Divine Nature, than the blind applauses of the ignorant" (HRS 349). While religious and theological considerations are not direct preoccupations of the Royal Society ("the Royal Society is abundantly cautious, not to intermeddle in Spiritual things", HRS 347), the natural philosopher inevitably "has always before his eyes the beauty, contrivance and order of Gods works" (HRS 349). This aspect of his pursuit demands his attention and inevitably provokes speculation.

There are two main aspects to Sprat's discussion of the relationship of natural philosophy to religion and theology. The most basic of these is the notion that the examination and discovery of the complexity of what are apparently the most simple things — the best example of this would be in the use of the microscope to examine the details of leaves or insects — increases man's awe at the complexity of God's creation as a whole. Thus "ordinary Works . . . they do almost raise to the height of wonders, by the exact Discovery, which they make of their excellencies" (HRS 361-62). Further, when man sees and understands such formerly incomprehensible, indeed unimaginable,

wonders as "the numberless particles that move in every mans Blood" he will recognize that "what the Scripture relates of the Purity of God, of the Spirituality of his Nature, and that of Angels, and the Souls of men, cannot seem incredible" (HRS 348). This physical/spiritual transfer is a common argument, almost an artistic device, of seventeenth century natural philosophers. As ordinary objects became more complex and wonderful, so formerly wonderful objects became more easily comprehensible, or at least credible, and no less wonderful. It was as if man had entered a newly perceived world, or gained a whole new means of perception. As man's observation became more complex, so did the objects of creation perceived by him, and so therefore did God their creator. It did seem like the dawn of a golden age. Man's knowledge would be greatly increased, as he began to see the previously unimaginable wonder and complexity of everything around him. This could only lead him to redouble his praise for the origin and creator of all things; and his gratitude would be only the more acceptable to God the more man understood and fully appreciated the wonders that God had prepared for him. Further, as man's physical knowledge of the creation aids and enhances his praises and religious belief by showing him the true complexity of God's creation, his evaluation of the spiritual aspect of his nature, of creation, and of God himself, will also be enhanced. To "understand aright what is supernatural, it is a good step first to know what is according to Nature" (HRS 352). Knowledge of nature is a key to all knowledge, physical and spiritual; it enhances man's nature and his perception of and relation to the whole of creation and to God himself.

The second aspect to Sprat's consideration of natural

philosophy and religion is a development from this. It culminates in an almost metaphysical view of the natural philosopher's work. The first, more simple theme was concerned to explain the benefits, in physical and spiritual terms, of natural philosophy to religion. The second theme intercepts and develops this. Intercepts, because it might be argued that, while natural philosophy enables man to see and understand more of God's work, it was not part of the divine intention that man should see and understand more than he was formerly accustomed or allowed to see. It might be suggested that he should only use his own eyes, unaided by the microscope, or that, in aspiring to understand more of creation he repeats Adam's sin. Sprat answers any possible objections before they are made by showing that man too is God's creation, and so anything that benefits him is not a matter of personal profit to man alone (as against God) but to the advantage of creation as a whole: man honours God his maker by exercising his faculties to the full. Indeed, for Sprat, the "greatest Blemish of human Nature" is "a defect in . . . Knowledge and Understanding" (HRS 350): it is an offence to God if man does not make full use of the endowments, those of "Knowledge and Understanding", in which he is unique. Researching into every aspect of creation becomes a duty rather than an offence to God, as it is a duty to mankind. "This was the first service, that Adam perform'd to his Creator, when he obey'd him in mustring, and naming, and looking into the Nature of all the Creatures" (HRS 349-50). "God never yet left himself without witness in the World" (HRS 350) and this "witness" is to be found, as Bacon said, as much in God's works as in God's word, so "it is not only sottishness, but prophaneness for men to cry out

against the understanding of Nature: For that being nothing else but the instrument of God, whereby he gives being and action to things; the knowledge of it deserves so little to be esteem'd impious, that it ought rather to be reckon'd as Divine" (HRS 351). Natural philosophy thus has a particular and special religious value and importance, for it deals with and examines, seeks to know in the greatest detail, the "instrument of God". Its knowledge, then, "ought . . . to be reckon'd as Divine".

Sprat claimed that natural philosophy deals in "all the objects of men's thoughts: which can be nothing else, but either God, or Man, or Nature" (HRS 81). All three subjects are connected, but "Nature" claims a special place. The study of nature leads man to a better understanding of God, in both his physical and spiritual manifestations, but so does study of man (in whom "may be consider'd the Faculties, and operations of . . . Souls", HRS 82), God's greatest creation. Nature, God and man are too closely interrelated to allow a study of the scope of natural philosophy to concentrate solely on nature. God and man inevitably enter the discussion, and Sprat not unwillingly considers the ultimately metaphysical relationship of all three, nature, God and man, in terms that recall Bacon's pyramid of knowledges in his discussion of "Metaphysic":[7]

> Such is the dependance among all the orders of creatures; the inanimate, the sensitive, the rational, the natural, the artificial: that the apprehension of one of them, is a good step towards the understanding of the rest: And this is the highest pitch of humane reason; to follow all the links of this chain, till all their secrets are open to our minds; and their works advanc'd, or initiated by our hands. This is truly to command the world; to rank all the varieties, and degrees of things, so orderly

> one upon another; that standing on top of them, we may perfectly behold all that are below, and make them all serviceable to the quiet and peace, and plenty of Man's life. And to this happiness, there can be nothing else added: but that we make a second advantage of this rising ground, thereby to look the nearer into heaven: An ambition, which though it was punish'd in the old World, by an universal Confusion when it was manag'd with impiety and insolence: yet, when it is carried on by that humility and innocence, which can never be separated from true knowledg; when it is design'd not to brave the creator of all things, but to admire him the more: it must needs be the utmost perfection of humane Nature.
> (HRS 110-11)

It is in this "utmost perfection of humane Nature" that the full potential of natural philosophy can be realised. The History, itself a highly wrought work of art, presents a whole philosophy which looks forward to a new golden age for man in national and universal terms. Men will become "Gods one to another" as they study "all the objects of men's thoughts", "God, or Man, or Nature". Man will learn to "direct his praises aright", finding "wonders" in "ordinary Works" and attaining knowledge of the supernatural by ever increasing knowledge of the natural world: nature is "the instrument of God" and knowledge of it is "Divine".

2. Abraham Cowley, A Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy.

Cowley's brief Proposition is the earliest apology for the aims and ideals of the Royal Society — it in fact takes the form of a plea for the foundation of a "Philosophical Colledge", the role of which, to a certain extent at least, the Royal Society was to fill. The college is necesssary, Cowley says, because "the solitary and unactive Contemplation of Nature, by the most ingenious

Persons living, in their own private Studies" will effect little (AEP A5^{r-v}). Corporate and active "Contemplation" will produce the practical results Cowley seeks — there is a particular emphasis on the utilitarian aspect of natural philosophy — but is also the best means to a better understanding of nature. Cowley, like many advocates of natural philosophy in the seventeenth century (particularly John Webster in the 1650's) attacks the still widely held academic belief that the ancients (at least in combination with their commentators) knew or could show the way to knowledge of all there is to know about nature and the natural world. Even in 1661, Cowley says, students are not given sufficient opportunity to experiment and examine for themselves, but are required to study ancient and inadequate authorities rather than the world around them. Man, Cowley says, must always seek new knowledge and not just inherit it.

Cowley's analysis of the various divisions of learning and knowledge is more explicit than that of other seventeenth century advocates of natural philosophy. Thus his particular relevance here. "All Knowledge" he states, "must either be of God, or of his Creatures, that is, of Nature" (AEP A2^{r}). For Cowley, there are no other forms of knowledge or study. "Knowledge of God" is "Divinity" and not part of Cowley's present subject, although he finds it well provided for (AEP A2^{r}). "Knowledge . . . of Nature", that is all knowledge other than "Divinity", is part of "Natural Philosophy" (AEP A2^{r}). "Natural Philosophy" is divided into "Contemplation" of either the "Immediate" or "Mediate" "Creatures of God" (AEP A2^{r}). "Creatures" might now be read as "creations": the "Immediate . . . Creatures of God" belong to the realm of pure nature, the original

creation of God; while the "Mediate Creatures of God" are more accurately the "Creatures" or creations of man — in relation to God they are the "Creatures of his Creature" (AEP A2^{r}). The "Mediate creatures" include "all Arts for the use of Humane Life" (AEP A2^{r}). The subdivision of these "Arts" — all part of "Natural Philosophy" — may be examined.

Firstly there are the purely human arts, made or created by man alone. These include rhetoric, politics, grammar and logic. Secondly there are the mixed arts, which concern "Mans Creatures no otherwise then by the Result which he effects in Conjunction and Application of the Creatures of God" (AEP A2^{r}). These mixed arts depend upon a connection with the "Immediate . . . Creatures of God", but are still counted among the "Mediate Creatures" because they depend upon the intervening skill and interest of man. It is knowledge of the "Immediate . . . Creatures of God" and of the mixed arts among the "Mediate Creatures" that Cowley finds deficient. The human arts, like divinity, are well provided for, but not "Inquisition into the Nature of God's Creatures, and the Application of them to Humane Uses (especially the latter)" (AEP A2^{r}). It is these, as part of "Natural Philosophy", that the proposed "Philosophical Colledge" should provide for. Eventually, according to Sprat's History, the Royal Society was also to devote its energies to the remainder of Cowley's "Natural Philosophy", the human arts, as well. Cowley thought that, as far as the college was concerned, the "Fountains of Nature" would offer more and better rewards than the "Cisterns of men" (AEP A4^{r-v}), although he is interested in the practical human uses of nature. He asserts the probability that research into nature and what might be termed the

natural arts will reveal new possibilities for man's wonder and benefit. Cowley's poem "To the Royal Society", published as a Preface to Sprat's History in 1667, contains a metaphorical reference to the fall of man which suggests the direct involvement of God with nature and man's research into it, and implies that, to the natural philosopher, the world can appear as a paradise:

> The Orchard's open now, and free;
> Bacon has broke the Scar-crow Deitie;
> Come, enter, all that will,
> Behold the rip'ned Fruit, come gather now your Fill.
> Yet still, methinks, we fain would be
> Catching at the Forbidden Tree,
> We would be like the Deitie,
> When Truth and Falshood, Good and Evil, we
> Without the Sences aid within our selves would see;
> For 'tis God only who can find
> All Nature in his Mind.[8]

To acknowledge that it is "God only who can find / All Nature in his Mind" is to be reminded that God remains the source of all knowledge, whether "Divinity" or "Natural Philosophy": "All Knowledge must be of God or of his Creatures, that is, of Nature" (AEP A2^{r}). Cowley's concise Proposition offers a definition of "Natural Philosophy" that includes all knowledge not classifiable as "Divinity" — whether actually part of nature or of the natural or human "Arts" — and his poem, in suggesting that "We would be like the Deitie", implies at once the religious relevance and involvement of natural philosophy and the paradisal promise for man of his entry into "Orchards" of knowledge opened by the advancement of Baconian learning.

3. Robert Boyle, Some Considerations Touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy.

For Boyle, "Experimental Natural Philosophy" entails the

"Improving of Men's Understandings" by "the Study of the Book of Nature" (UEP 2). "The two chief advantages, which a real acquaintance with Nature brings to our Minds", he claims, "are First, by instructing our Understandings, and gratifying our Curiosities; and next, by exciting and cherishing our Devotion" (UEP 2). He sees natural philosophy as involving a re-acquaintance with nature on "real" terms. For him, nature and the study of it acquire in the practice and process of natural philosophy a special and apparently metaphysical significance. The objects of nature are not only of practical use and benefit to man, assisting him as he masters them, as Boyle says; they are also able to assist man "to become acceptable to their author". Boyle sees man in a dominant and central position in creation, seeking and acquiring a special knowledge of nature and, partly thus, but partly by an inherent rationality or divinity of his own which is confirmed and extended by this knowledge, communicating in a very special way with God the creator. As this process becomes more advanced, through the practice of a very broadly conceived philosophy of nature, man's divinity and rationality is increased and advanced so that he himself becomes something of a God-like figure.

Boyle assumes that God's "principal ends" in creating all things "were, the Manifestation of His own Glory, and the Good of Men" (UEP 22). The two are of course connected, partly because of man's unique nature as a link between God and His creation, able to recognise the related significance of both. Man's praise for and appreciation of nature is the means of reconciling the assertion that God made all things for his own glory, all things for man,

and man for Himself. It is possible for man "to define all the Ends and Aimes of the Omniscient God in His Great Work of the Creation" (UEP 22), and the apparent inexhaustibility of creation, made still more evident by natural philosophy, would seem to make this a valid assumption. It is through man, then, that God's creation is returned to him. Certainly, Boyle says, "it is no great presumption to conceive, that the rest of the Creatures were made for Man, since he alone of the Visible World is able to enjoy, use and relish many of the other Creatures, and to discerne the Omniscience, Almightinesse and Goodnesse of their Author in them, and return Him praises for them" (UEP 25).

Nature, God's creation, and the understanding and appreciation of it is, for Boyle, a religion: "I esteem the World a Temple . . . [and] . . . Man sure must be the Priest, ordain'd (by being qualified) to celebrate Divine service not only in it, but for it" (UEP 55-56). Boyle's method of understanding and appreciating nature is "Experimental Natural Philosophy": "the sublimest Knowledge here attainable will not destroy, but onely heighten and enoble our admiration, and will prove the Incense or more spiritual and acceptable part, of that Sacrifice of Praise . . . wherein the Intelligent Admirer offers the whole world in Eucharists to its Maker" (UEP 114). The idea of man's praise and appreciation being improved by his better understanding of God's creation, and the religious imagery in which this idea is expressed, are typical of the speculative aspects of seventeenth century natural philosophy. Boyle regards this as being not a particular study in its own right but as a form of "Philosophical Worship of God" (UEP 113). He paraphrases a passage from Galen,

to the effect that natural philosophy or "the discerning ones self, and discovering to others the Perfections of God display'd in the Creatures" is "a more acceptable act of Religion than the burning of Sacrifices or Perfumes upon his Altars" (UEP 115). Natural philosophy is not only a religion but the best of religions.

As a religion, however, natural philosophy is not in conflict with the Christian religion. It can be subscribed to within Christian terms, and in fact complements and extends these. It offers a confirmation, by means of reason, of the more traditional faith: Boyle, like the Cambridge Platonists and John Locke, asserts "the reasonableness of assenting to the Christian Religion" (UEP 105). Unlike Henry Power, who asserted that natural philsophy might one day discover to man "Spiritualities themselves", Boyle admits that some things must remain unattainable by man. This is no cause for surrendering to assertions of dogmatic faith over and above reason, however: man must know what he can know and attempt still further knowledge. He should admire what he cannot understand. Yet if some things do transcend his capacity for knowing, the depth of his knowledge and appreciation of what he can know will help him in the effort to know the unknowable: "admiration . . . being an acknowledgement of the Objects transcending our Knowledge, the learneder the transcendent Faculty is, the greater is the admired Objects transcendency acknowledg'd" (UEP 114). Man's learning, his knowledge of the more readily knowable material world, aids and develops his admiration, or at least his conception, of the immaterial. God is glorified less by the "vulgar astonishment of an unlettered Starer" than by the praise of those whose "industrious

Curiosity hath brought their understandings to a prostrate Veneration of what their Reason, not Ignorance, hath taught them to be perfectly comprehensible by them" (UEP 114).

For Boyle, then, experimental natural philosophy becomes a religion: its temple is the world and man the priest. He "alone . . . is able to enjoy, use and relish" God's creation to the full, "and to discerne the Omniscience, Almightinesse and Goodnesse of their Author" in its objects. All the "Ends of Aimes of the Omniscient God" can be defined in "His Great Work of the Creation", and all "Study of the Book of Nature" aids man's understanding, gratifies his curiosity, and is a vital enhancement of his worship of God. Boyle particularly admired "Hermes Trismegistus" as a (natural) philosopher and twice quotes the conviction expressed in the Hermetic writings that "the Thanks and Praises of Men, are the noblest Incense that can be offered up to God" (UEP 115; see also UEP 53). Experimental natural philosophy will help man to make this offering.

4. Henry Power, Experimental Philosophy.

Power makes a claim to modesty in his discussion of the power and promise of experimental philosophy: "As I would not derogate from the Greatness and Eminency of Man (as being a very Noble Creature;) so I would not have him arrogate too much to himself: For though it may be a pious, and morally good conception, To think that the whole world was made for him, yet I am sure 'tis no real and Physical Truth" (EP 162). Elsewhere, however, he claims, in terms considerably less modest, man's "Inheritance" to be "the whole Globe of the Earth" (EP 164): it is only "Lordship

of the whole Universe" that man must not assume, and even then he can "attempt and reach out at the Superior and more mysterious works of [God's] Creation, and therein . . . admire those things [he is] not capable to understand" (EP 164). "Certainly", Power says, "this world was made not onely to be Inhabited, but Studied and Contemplated by Man" (EP 183). Beyond "this World", while he may "admire" when he cannot "understand", there remains the possibility that knowledge of this world will lead man to knowledge of God's greater creations and even "Spiritualities themselves" (EP 58).

Power initially assumes that experimental philosophy is or should be confined to the physical world. God, he says, "hath given us such a large Inheritance, as the whole Globe of the Earth" and has "Subjugated all things therein to our use and service" (EP 164). Man should realise, though, that as "our Modern Philosophers have found", "not onely the Earth, but the whole Orbis Magnus (which is the Earth's Annual Circle it describes about the Sun) is but a Point, in regard to the immense distance of the Fixed Stars" (EP 163). Further, God has "endued our Souls with such spiritual and prying faculties, that we can attempt and reach at the Superior and more mysterious works of his Creation" (EP 164). Power's modesty is already in question, for this leads directly to the admiration of that which man cannot understand, and, further, to an attempt to understand even that. Man's own power and potential is more than adequately realised despite Power's other modest claims.

Experimental Philosophy can be regarded as a treatise on microscopy, because it is this which provides the focus for

Power's more general considerations. It was the "late discoveries of the Telescope, or ~~Mierscope~~ Microscope" (EP A3^{r}) which enabled men to become "critical spectators, surveyors, and adequate judges of the immense Universe" (EP B1^{r}). This, read in conjunction with Power's assertion that the "world was made not onely to be Inhabited, but Studied and Contemplated by Man", shows that man has, since the invention and development of the telescope and microscope, only recently entered into or regained a new or his real inheritance. The world was made to be contemplated by man, and he is now equipped to fulfil his function critically, as an "adequate" judge. The "faculties of the soul of our Primitive father Adam might be more quick & perspicacious in Apprehension, than those of our lapsed Selves; yet certainly the Constitution of Adams Organs was not divers from ours" (EP A4^{r}). By judicious use of his faculties as a critical spectator and adequate judge, equipped with modern instruments, man might regain, to a certain degree at least, a prelapsarian vision.

Power seeks to communicate something of this vision in his treatise, in part intended to communicate to those who are unable to use microscopes something of the world that is opened up by them. In his observations he provides continual reference to and comparison with the readily observable natural world — "Mites" observed in oatmeal behave like rabbits in burrows. His enthusiasm for his subject leaves him unable to restrict himself to simple comparisons. He must draw out a philosophical reference which implies, in the observation of "Mites in Cheese" for example, that everything in the natural world is more detailed, more ordered and more wonderful than the naked eye can recognize, and

that it is thus to the greater glory of both man and God to observe it more closely: "What rare Considerations might an Ingenious Spectator take up here, even from this singular Experiment? of the strange and most prodigious skilfulness of Nature in the fashion of so Minute an Animal" (EP 17). Power uses man's philosophical inclinations, applying them to his own particular observations: he looks beyond the material aspect of things, and must not only admire but seek to understand the spiritual. His comparisons with the naturally observable world become in this context more than simple comparisons: they are reflections of the simple wonder he senses, or expects others to sense, in his "Considerations" of the "strange and most prodigious skilfulness of Nature" in the most apparently simple objects. He is moved to a mode of expression unconnected with plain observation (his language is hardly that of Sprat's "Mathematical plainness"): "It is worth an Hour-glass of Time to behold the Crystal Sands that measure it, for they seem like Fragments of Crystal . . ." (EP 42). The simple observation of sand produces an elegant paradox, as consciously wrought as any art: he observes that which he times his observation by. The sand is crystalline; other objects appear, under the microscope, like mirrors, silver, needles or icicles. There is a dimension beyond mere physical observation in the philosopher's project to "find the various turnings, and mysterious process of this divine Art" in the "great Machine of the World" (EP 193). The world will be newly observed, not only as awesome evidence of God's power and skill, but also as true "art", a perfected expression of God's beauty and attributes in even the meanest things.

On the basis of the practical interest and utility of the microscope, then, Power can be seen to overlay a more speculative attitude to its power and promise. It is consideration of this more speculative aspect which most arrests attention in the book, and which prompts from Power enthusiastic language that calls into question his less marked claims to modesty. The practical content is contained within the speculative considerations. The microscope may be of value because it might "make good the Atomical Hypothesis" (EP 82). But Power is equally if not more interested in the more general implications. "Virtuosi" and experimental philosophers will "make way for the Springy Intellect to flye out into its desired Expansion": the "vast reach" of their "Designs" represents an attempt "to unriddle all Nature" (EP 191-92). Power's desire to limit man to examination of the world alone is forgotten. Consideration of "the overflowing of free Philosophy" (EP 192) is more representative of Power's book than its intention of acquainting readers with the practical use and interest of microscopy. He often seems more interested in the "rare Considerations" the experiments provoke than in the experiments themselves.

Despite his modest limitation of man to practical consideration of his earthly domain, therefore, Power begins to exalt man in his celebration of "the overflowing of free philosophy". Man will be able to attain knowledge not only of earthly but of heavenly things, while this knowledge may eventually become spiritual as well as material. In "A Digression of Animal Spirits" he refers to these as "the purest and most aetherial particles of all Bodies in the World whatsoever (and so consequently of nearest alliance to

Spiritualities)" (EP 71-72). The microscope can help man towards an understanding, perhaps, of the "Animal Spirits", just as it may confirm the "Atomicall Hypothesis". The notion of "Animal Spirits" is elaborated: "may it not be probable enough that these Spirits in the other World, shall onely be the Soul's Vehicle and Habit, and indeed really that [to sōma pneumatikon], mentioned by the Apostle" (EP 71-72). The physical understanding attainable by use of the microscope may become or extend into a spiritual understanding. This is more marked in a development from the consideration of the possible manufacture of microscopes powerful enough to allow "the Effluviums of the Magnet" (EP 155) to be seen. If this were possible, "we might hope to discover all Epicurus his Atoms, Des-Cartes his Globuli aetherii, and all those insensible Corpuscles which daily produce such Considerable effects in the generation and corruption of Bodies about us" (EP 155). Beyond this, "might not Microscopes hazard the discovery of the Aerial Genii, and present even Spiritualities themselves to our view?" (EP 155). This possibility, Power acknowledges, represents "A part of Philosophy but yet in discovery; and will, I fear, prove the last Leaf to be turned over in the Book of Nature" (EP 58).

This last assertion reflects the millenial aspect of natural philosophy ~~philsophy~~ and its ~~discoovry~~ discovery or re-discovery of the world or universe — its promise of a true golden age — as considered, for example, by Sprat. Power's emphasis on the possibility of the discovery and actual human perception and understanding of "Spiritualities" is representative of the assertions that enthusiastic seventeenth century natural philosophers could make. The possibilities revealed and suggested by the microscope inevitably

return to its ~~depedence~~ dependence on and indeed origin in man's mind. The microscope, promising direct understanding of "Spiritualities" is an artificial complement to man's "Natural . . . Eyes" (EP 155). Only man possesses the "Intrinsick Eye" "that will yet discover [the] materiality" of "Spiritualities" (EP 155). This "Intrinsick Eye" is man's "piercing Eye of Reason" (EP 155): it is through the "Eye of Reason" rightly applied that true understanding and perception are attained, and it is therefore through the "Eye of Reason" that the experimental philosopher may seek, with the help of the instruments he contrives and uses, to see and understand "Spiritualities themselves".

Power acknowledges that the speculative aspect of experimental philosophy "will, I fear, prove the last Leaf to be turned in the Book of Nature", but he does believe that, eventually, man will see and understand "Spiritualities themselves". This would be borne out by much of the book. His celebration of "the overflowing of free Philosophy" in an "Age wherein all men's Souls are in a kind of fermentation, and the Spirit of Wisdom and Learning begins to mount and free it self from drossie and terrene Impediments" (EP 192) shows that man can and should as a duty to God attain the ultimate possible knowledge. The world was made to be "Studied and Contemplated by Man": this is a "homage due to [the] Creator", a "Rational Sacrifice to God" (EP 183) made on the basis of and through the exercise of man's "Eye of Reason". The experimental philosopher, designing "to unriddle all Nature" and to find "the various turnings, and mysterious process of this divine Art" through the exercise of his "Eye of Reason" is making "a Tribute [he] ought to pay for being men, for it is Reason that transpeciates

our Natures and makes us little lower than the Angels" (EP 183).

5. Robert Hooke, Micrographia.

Hooke observes of the Royal Society and its activities that "the ends of all these Inquiries" they intend to be the Pleasure of Contemplative minds, but above all, the ease and dispatch of the labours of mens hands" (MG E1^{r}). The "Pleasure of Contemplative minds" does have a place in Hooke's attitude to natural philosophy, as "men are generally rather taken with the plausible and discursive, then the real and solid part of Philosophy" (MG E1^{r}). It is this "plausible and discursive" aspect that is more relevant here. For this the Preface to Micrographia is particularly important and is alone discussed.

Man, Hooke claims, is especially privileged above the rest of creation in that he can not only "behold the works of Nature" but also consider, compare, alter, assist and improve them (MG A3^{r}). His "deriv'd corruption, innate and born in him" (MG A3^{r}), Adam's sin, can be overcome by his activity with regard to the works of nature, God's creation. His sin is, in part at least, "a wilful and superstitious deserting the Prescripts and Rules of Nature" but he can set this right by proper application of "artificial Instruments and methods" to the "considering, comparing, altering, assisting, and improving them to various uses" (MG A3^{r}). This proper application can be achieved only by a renewed experience of and attitude to man's existence and activity, for he has lost a natural purity and "rightness" in his relations with God and His creation, the world. "The only way which remains for us to recover some degree of those former perfections, seems to be, by rectifying the operation of the

Sense, the Memory, and Reason, since upon the evidence, the strength, the integrity, and the right correspondence of all these, all the light, by which our actions are to be guided, is to be renewed, and all our command over things is to be establisht" (MG A3^{r}). Natural philosophy offers the opportunities and methods for doing this, by recovering "some degree of . . . former perfections". Adam's fall left man in an inherently imperfect state; natural philosophy can provide man with a new inheritance, an inheritance comparable to that originally assumed by Adam. Sprat looks toward the dawn of a golden age, Hooke looks to the recovery of an original state of purity and truth. Subsequent "deformities of the Sense" giving rise to "errors of the understanding" can be put right by the establishment, through natural philosophy, of a new "command over things".

Micrographia is the more exclusive study of microscopy that Power's book cannot be. Hooke more readily turns away from the "plausible and discursive" aspect of natural philosophy. He does however outline some speculative considerations which surround the "reformation in Philosophy" (MG A4^{v}) he conceives as leading to the recovery of "former perfections". This is a "universal cure of the Mind" (MG B1^{v}) under the influence of which "all the fine dreams of Opinions, and universal metaphysical natures . . . would quickly vanish" (MG B2^{r}). The new philosopher will be guided by "plain intentions of imploying his Senses aright" (MG B1^{r}). This seems to carry overtones similar to those of Sprat's plea for "Mathematical plainness". The reformed philosophy Hooke is proposing can be recognised, however, to be less concerned with plainness than with elaboration, the perception and understanding of things and their

contexts "in a right manner" (MG A3^{v}) as he says, and also sometimes with the "metaphysical" considerations he elsewhere denies. Adam's observations were more true, but not necessarily more plain than those of the erring philosophers about to attempt Hooke's renewal.

Among the many pursuits of natural philosophy, microscopy, Hooke suggests, will be among the foremost in opening up the new and more extensive area of observation. It is new, it reveals the new: everything, even the entirely mundane and apparently ordinary, it seems, is greater and more remarkable than ever before perceived when exposed to the view of the natural philosopher. The "Earth it self, which lyes so near to us, under our feet, shews quite a new thing to us, and in every little particle of its matter, we now behold almost as great a variety of Creatures, as we were able before to reckon up in the whole Universe it self" (MG A4^{v}). Without returning to the true observation of nature, an observation renewed in an attempt to recover the "former perfections" of Adam, philosophy threatens to destroy itself. The renewal attempted by natural philosophy can be offered as "a material and sensible Pleasure" and "a matter of high rapture and delight of the mind" (MG C2^{r}) which assists and advances "the labours of man's hands" and contributes to "the Pleasure of Contemplative minds". Through it man can seek the restoration of at least some of the "former perfections" that were lost after Adam's fall. "And as at first, mankind fell by tasting of the forbidden Tree of knowledge, so we, their Posterity, may be in part restor'd by the same way, not only by beholding and contemplating, but by tasting too . . . fruits of Natural knowledge" (MG B3^{r-v}).

6. Natural Philosophy and Divine Philosophy

Sprat's emphasis on the "Mathematical plainness" of the language necessary to the study he proposes and defends has helped to obscure a true aspect of natural philosophy. It was, for seventeenth century practitioners, a "material and sensible pleasure", "a matter of high rapture and delight of the mind" (MG C2^{r}). As Butler observed, Sprat's theory of mathematical plainness became in practice a not untypical use of "Oratory and Declamation" as means of expressing both the "high rapture and delight of the mind" that natural philosophy promoted, and the theological justification for it. There is an essential duality to the "true Philosophy of Nature" (HRS 4-5) as it claims to focus on the "solid substance of Science itself" (HRS 18), for it is also able to "make way for the Springy Intellect to flye out into its desired Expansion" (EP 191-92). That apparent duality may however issue only from later concepts of the supposed mathematical plainness of scientific pursuit. There may be, in the seventeenth century, an essential synthesis, representing both "material and sensible" aspects of one pursuit, "the overflowing of free Philosophy" (EP 192) in an attempt to "unriddle all Nature" (EP 191-92) by means of the "rare Considerations" of any "Ingenious Spectator" (EP 17).

These "rare Considerations" were often seen to take the form of "contemplations". Sprat speaks of the natural philosopher's "contemplation of God's visible Works" (HRS 375), his "perpetual contemplations" (HRS 406). Cowley looks forward to a corporate rather than a solitary "Contemplation of Nature" (AEP A5^{r-v}). Boyle speaks of the "Contemplation of Natures Wonders" (UEP 2). Power insists that "this World was made not onely to be Inhabited, but

Studied and Contemplated by Man" (EP 183). Hooke says that natural philosophy is available for "the Pleasure of Contemplative minds" (MG E1^{r}). "Contemplation" itself carries Platonic overtones, and there does seem to be a Platonic emphasis in the contemplations of the seventeenth century natural philosophers: they perceive the ideal, God, in the essence of the real (or "unreal") world. Traherne's own emphasis on "the Contemplation of GODs Works, wherin all the Riches of His Kingdom will appear" (C II.3) is precisely of this same order. For him man is the "Contemplator of the Univers" (C IV.75). Whether Platonic or not, the natural philosopher's contemplation implies at once the general and philosophical attitude available to all men as their initiation into true natural philosophy.

Natural philsophy was, potentially, a whole philosophy. It might be defined, in Boyle's words, as the "Contemplation of Nature" and "Philosophical Worship of God" (UEP 3, 113-14). "The Natural Philosopher is to begin, where the Moral ends" (HRS 33). Sprat's phrase was echoed in Richard Cumberland's De Legibus Naturae (1672), dedicated to Sir Orlando Bridgeman while Traherne was his Chaplain. Speaking explicitly of the Royal Society and its "great Genius's", Cumberland defines "Natural Philosophy", "in the large sense".[9] In this "large sense", "the whole of moral Philosophy . . . is ultimately resolv'd into . . . Conclusions of true Natural Philosophy".[10] Natural philosophy "does not only comprehend all those Appearances of natural bodies, which we know from Experiment, but also inquires into the Nature of our Souls . . . and at length leads Men . . . to the Knowledge of the first Mover".[11] It is in this sense — the "large sense" — that natural philosophy, the contemplation of nature and philosophical worship of God, inspires a whole philosophy,

a whole basis for apprehension and action, which is not unlike Traherne's own "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3).

The aim of Traherne's divine philosophy is Felicity. When Felicity is achieved the philosopher himself will be God-like, possessing God's own knowledge of God's own creation. Then "the best of all possible things are after the Similitud of God enjoyed" (SM II.2). The physical world itself accounts for a large proportion of "the best of all possible things", for God made the world and "The visible World is Wonderfully to be Delighted in Highly to be Esteemed" (C II.97). "Enjoyment of the world" (C I.25) is an important means to Felicity. "Enjoyment" involves thorough appreciation through knowledge and understanding, and the rigorous use of all man's Capacity. "Enjoyment of the world" is attained by "Prizing" and "Esteeming" things to the full (C I.13, I.25); and it is in "Enjoyment of the world" that "the best of all possible things are after the Similitud of God enjoyed". There are two aspects to Enjoyment. Firstly, the world must be examined and known, prized and esteemed, in a basic, physical sense, for its practial utility. "The Terrestrial Services of Heaven & Earth are Exceeding Great" (SM II.87). "The visible World is Wonderfully to be Delighted in and Highly to be Esteemed" (C II.97), and "A Noble Spirit . . . can Survey it all, and Comprehend its Uses" (C II.12). "The WORLD is unknown, till the Value and Glory of it is seen: till the Beauty and Serviceableness of its Parts is Considered" (C I.18), so man should "break the WORLD into Parts, to examine them asunder" (C I.23). Man himself is by nature "Inquisitive" (C III.15), possessed of "A Curiositie Profound and Unsatiable" (C III.42). He readily becomes "Engaged with Enquiries" (C III.17) about the

earth, the stars, and all the "Common Things" (C III.53) of the physical world. He seems especially equipped for the pursuit of "Natural Philosophy" (C III.44). This, "signifying the Lov of Nature" promotes "Diligent inquisition into all Natures . . . so far forth as by Nature and Reason they may be Known" (C III.44). It is an inclusive study — more inclusive than that defined by Cowley (AEP A2^{r}) — for "this Noble Science . . . is most Sublime and Perfect, it includes all Humanity and Divinity together GOD, Angels, Men, Affections, Habits, Actions, Virtues: Evry Thing as it is a Solid intire Object singly proposed, being a subject of it, as well as Material and visible Things" (C III.44).

There is a second aspect to "Enjoyment of the world". While the "Terrestrial Services of Heaven & Earth" are "Exceeding Great", it is still more important in true Enjoyment that man should see that even "a Sand Exhibiteth the Wisdom and Power of God" (C I.27). The physical world is an image of its spiritual creator, and man is the link between the two. So, "when you are once acquainted with the World, you will find the Goodness and Wisdom of God, . . . manifest therin" (C I.10). The "World . . . Discovers the Being of GOD unto you" (C II.1), and his "Greatness" can best be "seen in the vastness of His works" (SM II.88). Man must "enjoy this Adspectable world" (SM III.9) in this spiritual as well as the physical sense. "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's kingdom" (SM III.9), and it is thus that, in the pursuit of Felicity, "The Articles of our faith are the objects of Enjoyment proposed to Speculation" (SM III.58). Natural philosophy is itself "Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends" (C III.44) — to man's pursuit of Felicity — but Traherne's

particular recognition of it is less important than the sense in which his whole "Divine Philosophy" centres on the "Contemplation of Nature" and "Philosophical Worship of God".

If natural philosophy is a whole philosophy of nature and man's experience of it, Traherne's attitude to man's place in the world is relevant to a consideration of his relation to the work of contemporary natural philosophers. In an account of his childhood Traherne implicitly denies original sin: "I Seemed as one Brought into the Estate of Innocence" (C III.2). "Adam in Paradice had not more sweet and Curious Apprehensions of the World, then I when I was a child" (C III.1). At one time the world was to him, literally, a paradise. This "Estate of Innocence", however, lasted only for a very few years of his early childhood, for he soon experienced a personal and individual "Apostasie" (C III.2), an alienation from his natural inheritance comparable to Adam's expulsion from Eden but brought about not by "inward corruption or Depravation" but by acquaintance with the "outward Bondage of Opinion and Custom" (C III.7). He recognizes, after his apostasy, that "that Divine Light wherewith I was born" was "the Best unto this Day, wherin I can see the Universe" (C III.1): his "Infant-Ey" (M II.86-87), like a "Divine Light", provided the best attitude to and apprehension of the world. Then "My Knowledge was Divine" (C III.2). The search for Felicity conducted in his writing is an attempt to refound the "Pure and Virgin Apprehensions" of the "Infant-Ey" not in their naive innocence but consciously, on the basis and experience of the "Highest Reason" (C III.22). The "Infant-Ey" gives place to the "Ey of Reason" (C I.25), itself like Power's "Eye of Reason" (EP 155) which "transpeciates our

Natures and makes us little lower than the Angels" (EP 183). The "Highest Reason" transcends "Intuition" (C III.2) having accepted it as a valuable example.

Before his apostasy Traherne enjoyed the natural world as Adam enjoyed paradise. He seeks this enjoyment again after his apostasy: it is not nature that changes ("Natural Things are Glorious, and to know them Glorious", C III.9) but man. His "innocent Clarity" is "ecclypsed" by false "Customs and maners" (C III.7). The natural world known intuitively to the infant eye and sought again by the eye of reason is "Divine" (C III.9). It is, for the innocent infant eye, a new world: "All appeared New and Strange at the first, inexpressibly rare, and Delightfull, and Beautiful" (C III.2). "I was Entertained like an Angel with the Works of GOD in their Splendor and Glory" (C III.2). He was "Inquisitive" (C III.15), possessed of "Curiosity" (C III.22), "Engaged with Enquiries" (C III.17) about the earth and its existence, the stars and the "infinit Space beyond the Heavens" (C III.18): "The Skies were mine, and so were the Sun and Moon and Stars, and all the World was mine, and I the only Spectator and Enjoyer of it" (C III.3). "I Knew by the Perfection of the Work there was a GOD" (C III.17).

There is a definite motive behind Traherne's apparently simple account. He particularly wanted "to see how things stood in Paradice before they were Muddied and Blended and Confounded, for now they are lost and buried in Ruines. Nothing appearing but fragments . . . It was his Desire to recover them and to Exhibit them again to the Eys of Men. Abov all things he desired to see those Principles which a Stranger in this World would covet to behold upon his first

appearance" (C IV.54). So, too, as an image of the wonder inspired by the natural philosopher's re-apprehension of natural things, Boyle cited the "transport and surprizall of a Maid born blind when . . . she obtained the first sight of the various objects of the World" (UEP 3). Traherne begins the Centuries with an image which reflects these aims — the tabula rasa, the "Empty Book" which "containeth Nothing" but is "Capable of all Things" (C I.1) and provides a surface upon which the "Principles which a Stranger in this World would covet to behold" may be placed and examined. In this examination it is necessary "to be freed from . . . Seducing and Enslaving Errors" (C I.36), to see things in that "Innocent Clarity", the "Divine Light" of which the infant eye, like Adam in paradise, was possessed. Thus an apparently new world will be presented to man's restored vision, "almost a new Nature . . . reveal'd" as Dryden said in looking at the progress of natural philosophy. This "new Nature" was seen by natural philosophers as a recovery of the paradisal aspect of the world, a re-apprehension of the world by a recovered "Innocent Clarity" now enhanced by reason. For Hooke, Adam's sin was "a Wilful and Superstitious deserting the Prescripts of Nature", Sprat's "defect in . . . Knowledge and Understanding" which is the "greatest Blemish of human Nature" (MG A3^{r}; HRS 350). Through natural philosophy, however, it should be possible by the examination and understanding, the thorough enjoyment, of nature, to "recover some degree of . . . former perfections . . . by rectifying the Operations of the Sense, the Memory, and Reason"; "upon the evidence . . . of all these, all the Light, by which our actions are to be guided, is to be renewed, and all our command over things is to be established" (MG A3^{r}). By

true perception and understanding of the objects of creation the "deformities of Sense" and "errors of the understanding" of fallen man may be set right. While the "faculties of the soul of our Primitive father Adam might be more quick & perspicacious in Apprehension, than those of our lapsed Selves; yet certainly the Constitution of Adam's Organs was not divers from ours" (EP A4^{r}). Fallen man must use what Power calls his "Intrinsick Eye", his "piercing Eye of Reason" (EP 155), to recapture the view of the world enjoed by Adam, to restore a prelapsarian state. It is by his own "Ey of Reason" (C I.25) that Traherne seeks to overcome his own apostasy or fall, and to re-establish the "Curious Apprehensions of the World" (C III.1) of his "Estate of Innocence" on the principles of the "Highest Reason". Then "All appeared New, and Strange at the first, inexpressibly rare, and Delightfull, and Beautifull" (C III.2). In the attempt by natural philosophers to "recover some degree of . . . former perfections" "almost a new Nature" will appear: "there is a new visible World discovered to the understanding . . . the Earth it self . . . shews quite a new thing to us" (MG A4^{v}). "New Scenes of Heaven already we espy".[12] The "world shall be . . . a very Paradice . . . the Temple of God" (C I.20): "When you enter into it, it is an illimited field of Varietie and Beautie where you may lose your self in the Multitude of Wonders and Delights" (C I.18).

"Awaken therefore thy Thoughts, and strongly apply them to see the Glory of Gods kingdom" (SM II.82), for it is through Enjoyment of the world that Felicity will be achieved. Man will attain God-likeness through the contemplation of nature and philosophical worship of God, through "Divine Philosophy". Sprat

sought "the utmost perfection of humane nature" (HRS 110-11) through natural philosophy, through the study of "all the objects of men's thoughts", "God, or Man, or Nature" (HRS 81). For Traherne "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF. All Things" are "the Objects of your Felicity" (C II.100) and through Enjoyment of them men will become, as Sprat says, "Gods one to another", able "to look the nearer into heaven" (HRS 110-11). Traherne, like Cowley, saw the natural world as a potential paradise, a resource for man's attempt to be "like the Deitie" through his study of a very broadly defined "Natural Philosophy".[13] Traherne's writing itself seems to represent what Power called "the overflowing of free Philosophy" (EP 192) which can "make way for the Springy Intellect to flye out into its desired Expansion" (EP 191-92). Through this, man's "piercing Eye of Reason" (EP 155) might "find the various turnings, and mysterious process of this divine Art" in God's "great Machine of the World" (EP 193) and even perhaps perceive "Spiritualities themselves" (EP 155). So Traherne sought, through his own "Ey of Reason" and by "Enjoyment of the World" (C I.25) to "discover all the Mysteries of Heaven" (C IV.81). Like Traherne, Power appreciated the "use and service" of things (EP 164) as they "sustain your Body and preserv your Life" (C II.1) in a practical sense; he, too, felt that men, as natural philosophers, were "little lower than the Angels" (EP 183). Traherne saw ways in which "the Smallest is Greater than an infinit Treasure" (C III.20), as Hooke saw through the micrscope that "in every little particle of matter, we now behold as great a variety of Creatures, as we were able before to reckon up in the whole Universe it self" ($A4^{v}$).

It was for Boyle that natural philosophy most explicitly

became a religion, to which the world was the temple and man the priest. His quotations from the Hermetic writings, defining the understanding praise that the natural philosopher should, and is particularly able to, offer to God, suggest the extent of identity between his views of man's ability to "enjoy, use and relish" creation (UEP 25) and Traherne's idea of the importance of "Enjoyment of the world" (C I.25). For Traherne and Boyle, man can attain the God-like knowledge of the world also common to the Hermetic image of man. But Sprat's idea of the world as "nothing else but the instrument of God" and "knowledge of it . . . as Divine" (HRS 351) is common to all the writings examined here. Traherne lived in what Power called an "Age wherein all men's Souls are in a kind of fermentation, and the Spirit of Wisdom and Learning begins to mount and free it self from drossie and terrene Impediments" (EP 192). "Never so much clear knowledge in any Age" (CE 283), Traherne exclaimed. Through the contemplation of nature and philosophical worship of God was sought the utmost perfection of human nature, whether by "natural" or "divine" philosophy. Men could become Gods one to another, able to look the nearer into heaven: God-likeness and Felicity would be achieved.

CHAPTER 6

The Early Notebook and the Commonplace Book

1. The Commonplace Book

The Commonplace Book occupies the greater part of the "Dobell Folio" containing Traherne's own fair copies of thirty-seven of his poems. It dates from circa 1669-1674 and is thus probably contemporary with work on Christian Ethicks and the Centuries of Meditations. The notebook is the most substantial of all Traherne's unpublished manuscripts apart from the Select Meditations. Traherne's classical education is evidenced at considerable length. These notes are complemented by references to and quotations from modern and contemporary authors. Quotation and original material are closely interwoven throughout; the manuscript does not comprise a series of direct notes. All the entries are copied under a series of 142 alphabetically arranged headings, a complete list of which offers an extensive survey of Traherne's intellectual interests and thought, even if some of the entries themselves are scant.[1] Given an awareness of Traherne's cast of mind as revealed in his other writings, the headings alone form a grid upon which it would be possible to place all manner of reflections about that mind and its activity. What is proposed here is, firstly, a survey a some of the shorter notes; secondly, a consideration of some of the longer entries; and, finally, an examination of some of the related sources.

The first impression of an examination of the manuscript is of Traherne's learning and the extent of his reading, particularly in classical philosophical authors. The first entry itself draws

attention to his reading of Plato and Aristotle, a reading that aims not at simple absorption but at a critical awareness of the respective authors and what Traherne sees as the validity and problems of their thought ("Aristotle's Philosophy", CB 16^{v}). He discriminates between the erudition and wisdom of both: "each, though in different regards, has a pre-eminence over the other". Lists of authors appear repeatedly, often with only a brief reference to their opinions on the subject in question: the entry under "Atoms" (CB 18^{v}), for example, refers to Democritus, Epicurus, Leucippus, Parmenides, Xenophanes and Zeno. Leucippus among these is seen to be worthy of note because he "is sayd to be the first among the Grecians, that asserted Atoms to be the first principle of all things". For opinions on "Matter" (CB 65^{v}) Traherne again turns to the ancients, including, as so often, Plato; but it is clear that these opinions have no prior claim to being exclusively correct or true. They are read as parts of necessary knowledge that are sometimes capable of foreshadowing later discoveries, ideas and developments, or of formulating seemingly undeniable observations. There is little sense of any weight of classical authority in the form that this could take in the seventeenth century, particularly for the "schoolmen" for whom Aristotle — "their dictator" as Bacon called him — still represented a valid, indeed almost definitive, outlook on the world. His opinion might still be cited as valid argument against observation and experiment, reflecting an overwhelming emphasis on the value of learning, a pressure of memory and knowledge from books as against that from nature and speculation upon the natural world. Traherne does not take up this closed, definitive

point of view: he seeks as much and as varied knowledge as possible, to exercise his Capacity to Enjoy to the full.

Traherne, then, speaks of Leucippus in the entry "Atoms" primarily because he was the first to assert what was then, and for Traherne, a common belief, that of atoms as "the first principle of all things". Later, under "Cohasion" (CB 26^{v}) he deals with "the holding together of the parts of matter". Consistency of opinion between ancient and contemporary thought is usually noted, as under "Colours" (CB 27^{v}): "Plato is herein followed by the new philosophers, who make colours to be the various mixture of Light and Darkness". The "new philosophers" of the Royal Society discussed the nature of light and colours at several meetings in 1671 and 1672, receiving in this latter year Newton's famous letter describing "his discovery of the nature of light, refractions and colours" made in 1665.[2] "Cold", too, is treated by Traherne (CB 27^{v}) as "it works in several Subjects" — "Air", "Water" and "Flesh" — notes following on the individual subjects in order, with reference to "Boyle . . . who . . . first . . . treated effectually of Cold" and to "Our great Verulam", Bacon.[3]

A subject that seems to have occupied Traherne a great deal in his reading is the place of the earth in the universe, and whether it is the stationary centre or a moving element in an otherwise centred scheme. This has been held as a focussing point in many studies of the development of science in the Renaissance: sixteenth or seventeenth century writers have their opinions on this matter abstracted so as to gauge their "modernity" — hence the puzzled and unnecessary debate about Milton's use of a partly

Ptolemaic scheme in Paradise Lost. This is a rather crude approach. It would seem, for example, that a seventeenth century attitude to such matters would allow much greater freedom than a late twentieth century one. There would be an acceptance of shades of meaning, a manipulation of different schemes to suit different ends, and personal adaptations and modifications that would now be rejected as false or inconsistent. What would now be constituted as a constant element in a positive, advancing and rigorously defined science, provoking a decision that must be made and always adhered to, would then be incorporated as part of a body of knowledge which could be freely traversed in search of differing "ways of seeing" providing varying materials for dialogue, debate and artistic use, and a free circulation of knowledge under different aspects. What is perhaps more important than the fact that Traherne was aware of the then "correct" system of the universe (that which is judged "correct" by later standards) is the extent of Traherne's awareness of the importance accorded this subject, his own opinion of its importance and, most significantly, the fact that he was interested in finding out about the actual physical nature of the universe and what has been said about it in order to discuss what he perceives of its nature in his own way but with this information available to him. On the question as to whether the earth stands still or moves Traherne consulted Aristarchus, Cleanthes, Echphantus, Heracleides Ponticus, Leucippus, Plato and Pythagoras among others; he also surveys more modern opinions:

> This Hypothesis of the Earth's moveing has been since revived by Cardinall Cusanus . . . But more professedly by Nicol Copernicus, who about

> the year 1540 wrote a book concerning it . . .
> Who was followed herein by Johannes Keplerius
> . . . Also by Christopher Rothmannus, Michael
> Maestlinus, David Origanus . . . Lately
> Patricius Galilaeus . . . with William Gilbert,
> our English physitian, famous for his book de
> Magnete, wherein he asserts this Hypothesis,
> having all maint[ain]ed the same opinion:
> which albeit it was condemned by the Cardinals
> at Rome, Anno 1616, yet it is still defended
> by many of the new Astronomers: Ticho Brahe,
> the famous Danish Astronomer went a middle way:
> Affirming that both Earth and heavens moved,
> though in a differing manner.
> ("Earth", CB 39^{r})

There is no lack of awareness or thought here: the whole of the Commonplace Book is a very contemporary document, despite (partly, it might be said, because of) some incursions into Platonic mysticism and a little pseudo-science. Traherne's interests did not lie exclusively the way of Thomas Vaughan's, however. The most dated feature in this way is Traherne's habit of looking at things in terms of the four elements. Elsewhere, however, he can say of "Mathematicks" (CB 66^{r}) that the "Pythagorean method of beginning with the mathematical sciences has been greatly applauded by some of our new phylosophers, as a method most proper for the fixing the volatile vagrant spirits of young students in their entrance on philosophie". It should also be remembered that both Boyle and Newton, foremost among "new phylosophers", took an interest in mystic alchemy. Traherne's own acquaintance with the work of "new phylosophers" seems to have been considerable.

There are in the Commonplace Book three all too short entries which deal with points central to any consideration of Traherne's writing. "Ethicks" (CB 41^{r}) he constitutes as "part of Morall philosophie" concerning the "right government of man's

self". There is some material here from Plato and the Hermetic writings, and the following note attributed to Pythagoras: "the proper subject of Ethicks, was the human soul, as capable of the chiefest good", its aim to bring about "a virtuous disposition" in the soul. These points are offered here in support of the attitude to ethics discussed in relation to Christian Ethicks: there is a strong moral and public emphasis in the idea of the necessary "virtuous disposition" and "right government of man's self", seeking the "chiefest good" in all aspects of life. There is also a note in the Commonplace Book on "Contemplation" (CB 28^{v}-29^{r}). This is perhaps the nearest Traherne comes to an actual consideration of what constitutes something at least similar to the "meditation" that has so long haunted studies of Traherne. The first source here is scriptural: the people of God were "much ravished with holy contemplations of the glory of god", Traherne records. He turns to Plato as his main source, for whom the supreme discipline was the "contemplation" of the "Idea" of "God" and "contemplation" of the "truth"; its aim the fashioning of God's image in the individual man.

Several headings deserve consideration at greater length. There are diverse references under the entry "God" (CB 50^{r}). Firstly to Pythagoras, then to Plato on the notion of the "divine essence" and "one immutable being" which is the "Archetype, or universal exemplar of all things made". "Plutarch mentions, that the Divine mind, and Ideas, (which Philo and Plotinus taught) are the same, and that his wisdome is the nature and substance of all Ideas: and that the whole series of Ideas is the same with the immense Sapience of god". Traherne records that, in the opinion

of many philosophers, "the mind" was the creator of all things. Such generalisation characterizes his whole thought, aimed as it is towards the inclusion of all possible thought and action in some theological scheme allowing maximum intellectual and actual freedom to man. Mention has been made of the seventeenth century tendency to seek and constitute a body of knowledge which could then be freely traversed as the individual mind desired or demanded. Traherne would perhaps rather formulate a broad and inclusive philosophy in which the whole and not just selected parts of this body of knowledge could be contained and apprehended as a way towards a greater, higher knowledge. The most likely source for this was a form of Platonism; its ideal source perhaps the Hermetic writings and their emphasis on the "Oneness" that is the state achieved by a filling, a repletion, of any mind with all "thoughts and intellections", thus achieving identity with any other "Oneness". "Oneness" can be constituted first, before the individual mind embarks on its project of repletion as the "Mind", the original "One" or "God". The "immense Sapience of God" is the (Divine) Mind and all Ideas, all "thoughts and intellections", the "One". The "Mind", then, can be the primally constituted achieved "Oneness", the apprehensive organ of the individual seeker of "Oneness", the means by which this subject can attain "Oneness" and the medium through which everything is known, either on the path to "Oneness" or in the achieved state. Apart from this inclusiveness this particular development of a Platonic "Mind" has another advantage in that it can itself be used to indicate "God" simply as the origin of all things, or any other god or any other origin. For example: "Pythagoras defined

God, a mind which communicateth and diffuseth himself through every part of the Universe, from whom all Animals receive Life, which accords with Plato's Anima mundi". It is wholly characteristic that Traherne disputes Xenophanes' opinion that men are unlike God, but that he seems to agree in concluding, with "Trismegistus, Plato, Socrates, and others" that "God is an infinite and eternal Mind".

The entry under "Deitie" (CB 33^{r-v}) extends the consideration of the nature of God into a discussion of the powers and means of God. The "Mind" in the Hermetic Platonic sense as used by Traherne exists firstly as a typically Platonic, and here usually Christianized, god-being (omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal, etc.), and secondly as a philosophical notion that is simply the final explanation for otherwise inexplicable human power and awareness. Essentially, the "Mind" is an absolute or a Platonic ideal of the human mind, and is conceived of as an (incorporeal) mind, as the contents of that mind (all ideas, as man's mind may contain some ideas but always seeks to contain all ideas) and as the means by which this content is retained, a means of knowing (which is the same for the "Mind" itself and for man as he participates in and strives towards the ideal "Mind"). This "Mind" is comparable to Traherne's "God". Under "Deitie" he considers the activity of God, comparable to the activity of "Mind" (eternal mind and man's own mind) in that it is only through activity that the "Mind" or God is realised, made real, or exists:

> All Power is not the Godhead. Nor will infinit and Eternal power satisfy the Soul, unless exerted. Bare power is neither Wise nor Good, nor Holy, nor Blessed and Glorious, nay tho it be infinite and Eternal. But it is Transformable

> into any Act, and may becom a voluntary simple Act, infinit and eternal, for it has power to be what it will. But simple Power without a Will is dead and idle. Almighty power therefore endued with Choise, and acting from all Eternity in the most wise and Glorious manner is the Deitie. a most pure incomprehensible Eternal Act, that is never Desolat nor idle, but the fountain and the end of all Things, ordering all, and enjoying all, that is God. Who is a voluntary Being unbegotten from all Eternity, yet Begotten of himself, and proceeding by that Generation to all his Creatures, the father and the first Born, the virtu and the Beauty of evry Creature.

As man participates in the "Mind" that is the deity, so he shares its characteristics and functions, mental activity and exertion being his only means of realising his existence and sustaining it, of realising his world in proportion to his "Ideas" as God realises the whole world in proportion to all "Ideas".

The notes on "Man" (CB 65^{r}) reveal little that is not traceable in Traherne's other writing but again reinforce the sense of the influence of Plato and the Hermetic writings. What Traherne sees as man's striving for God-likeness has its origin in the Hermetic assertion, quoted from the Commonplace Book in Christian Ethicks, that "an earthly man is a mortall God . . . the heavenly God is an immortall man". This is allied to two central formulations in the Hermetic writings, which are again implied in Christian Ethicks and noted in two aphorisms in the Commonplace Book: "first God, secondly the world thirdly man" and "The world for man, man for God". These embody the adapted Platonic scheme applied by Traherne: God made man and the world, and man's search for God and for God-likeness is conducted by knowing God through the world, the purpose for which it was created (as God made man and gave him the world, so, given the

world, man must "make" God). Traherne's notes acknowledge the derivation of such ideas. For Plato, he quotes, man is an "Image of God" or "a Kind of Imitation of God" striving always to become real rather than an image, to become the reality of which he is an image, to become God.

As man participates in "Mind" so does he in "Reason" (CB 82^{v}-83^{r}). "Right Reason is the same with the light or Law of nature" and man must communicate with this "light or Law" in order to achieve reason and develop this as a means to God-likeness. "Reason" is seen to determine the rightness of actions and to act as a measure of this, but it can be applied in the most general as in the most particular sense, to philosophy and intellectual activity of all kinds as to daily life. There are, however, two aspects to "Reason" as "the light or Law of nature". One is "Subjective" and perhaps the most important: it comprises the "common principles of Moralitie", "common principles fixed in conscience", that are "Active principles" and part of the "internall Law of conscience" as this is a human faculty, comparable to the knowing "Mind". As this is linked to the Platonic deified "Mind", so is conscience connected with a "Law of Nature". The second aspect is "Objective" and is said to comprise what Plato called the "broken traditions of the morall Law". The "morall law" can frame objectively, if fragmentarily, the external "Law of nature" to which the "Subjective" aspect of "Reason" is an internal mirror: there can be "the objective Light of nature comprized in the morall law" as opposed to "the subjective light, or law of conscience".

The "Soul" (CB 90^{r}) is also a human capacity open to other

influences. Traherne's notes here, although some are from Pythagoras, Diogenes Laertius and the Hermetic writings, are mostly from Plato. "Plato knew many things concerning the soul of Man its Divine Original, Immateriall, Infinite capacitie, Activitie, and perfection". The soul has contact with the divine, as the individual human mind participates in (and by) the divine "Mind" and reason connects with the "Law of nature". Plato is quoted as speaking of the "original . . . Idea to which [the soul] is akin, i:e: to God". The soul is "simple", "Incorporeal", "a self-moveing principle", "Infinite or boundless, never satisfied with any thing, but the first truth, and chiefest good . . . it . . . contends towards that which is pure, and alwaies the same, and most akin unto it". It is "nearly allyed to God" and "in a sober sense participates of a self goodness, and self beautie with God"; "it becomes the body to serve, but the soul to Rule, because it is most like unto the Divine, Immortal; Intelligible, most uniform, and first Being". Traherne writes of "the Immortalitie of the Soul . . . its Incorruptibilitie . . . sollicitude . . . Innate appetite . . . uniform self-motion . . . and connate Idea of God".

This kinship of the human soul with God is stressed in notes from both Plato and the Hermetic writings: "a soul after it is departed from the body, having striven the strife of piety, becomes another mind or God"; "being allied to God, [the soul] becomes . . . a partner of the Divine nature, whence it is in his manner, and according to its capacity, as God . . . Incomposite, Infinite, incorruptible, Immortal". These quotations are the most direct correspondences to Traherne's own insistence on man's

ability, his Capacity, to become, quite literally, God: all man's faculties can be turned to strive towards their own Platonic ideal, while God represents the sum of all those ideals and man's whole ideal as he is created in the image of God. "Plato gives us a good account of the faculties of the Rational Soul . . . he treats accurately . . . of the humane understanding . . . He makes the mind to be . . . a plant of the supreme Being, not earthly, but heavenly". Man's aim must be, by the exercise of all his faculties, to achieve the full reward of his "heavenly" endowment.

This last quotation continues: "The proper object of the mind Plato makes to be the truth". For Traherne "truth" is identifiable with God, who is its "Original Idea . . . the Eternal Wisdom and fountain of Light" ("Philosophie", CB 77^{v}-79^{v}). Since philosophy deals in truth, Traherne says, "it follows that the originall impulsive cause of all phylosophie was admiration of the admirable wisdom, power and goodness of god shineing in his works", a form of "Natural Philosophy" it would seem. Truth, then, having its origin in God, is revealed and available to man in God's works, which therefore comprise the matter with which philosophy must deal. Even as a form of natural philosophy, however, it must retain a thorough Platonic emphasis, although Traherne does decry the "Idolizing humour of crying up platonick philosophie". "Philosophie", as the thorough consideration of and research into God's works, can include "true Astronomie", but its essential practice is that of "expounding . . . natures and properties". Despite, or perhaps because of, its strong Platonic content, Traherne's "Philosophie", of which the Commonplace Book offers

an intriguing exposition, remains a very close parallel to contemporary thought about the natures and relations of God, the world and man.

2. Theophilus Gale, The Court of the Gentiles

The Commonplace Book, then, offers the possibility of a discussion of the notes made there by Traherne as if they were his own work. Traherne is very free in his notation: Carol Marks has shown that Traherne is careless of detail, freely condensing and abstracting, and interpolating occasional comment. "Traherne responded personally to, made use of, even manipulated, his sources".[4] The notebook could be studied rather as the product of Traherne's own mind, situated rather more closely to other texts (Plato, the Hermetic writings, etc.) than is usual in other more literary work. It evinces a principle of order and an imaginative re-creation of material that makes it a more attractive document than, say, the Church's Year Book, with its much more direct transcription from sources. A selection of the more significant notes has been treated somewhat in this manner, but it is also necessary to draw attention to and examine some of the sources themselves. Three of these demand attention: works by Theophilus Gale and Isaac Barrow, and John Everard's translation of part of the Hermetic corpus, The Divine Pymander. These three, all near-contemporary, sources can be shown to have a good deal in common with the matter and manner of Traherne's thinking, and deserve attention as means of highlighting parallel aspects of his thought as well as actual sources used and quoted by him.

Theophilus Gale's The Court of the Gentiles is of very varied

use and interest. Its full title is "The Court of the Gentiles: or, A Discourse touching the Original of Human Literature, both Philologie and Philosophie, from the Scriptures, and Jewish Church, In order to a Demonstration of 1. The Perfection of Gods Word, and Church Light 2. The Imperfection of Natures Light and mischief of Vain Philosophie 3. The right Use of Human Learning, and especially sound Philosophie". It was published in three parts: Of Philologie (1669); Of Philosophy (1671); and The Vanity of Pagan Philosophy with Of Reformed Philosophy (1677). This last volume, appearing only after Traherne's death, is of little interest here except in so far as it contains the fulfilment of an aim announced in the first part: "Plato's Moral, and Metaphysic or prime Philosophie is reduced to an useful Forme and Method". The whole project, after numerous and extended diversions, arrives at a Christian rationalisation of Plato very sympathetic to Traherne's thought in concept if not in execution. Little of the work is relevant here, but its very first chapter, and this almost in entirety, is essentially, if almost uniquely, interesting in relation to Traherne.

Gale's first chapter of his first book deals with "The Original of all Arts and Sciences from God". Gale builds his propositions slowly and from the most fundamental beginnings. His first aim is to establish the existence of God, here, typically, and as in Traherne and other contemporary Platonists, not necessarily a unique Christian-scriptural God the Father. It is proposed that "That there is one, first, eternal, simple, and absolutely necessary Being, whom we call God, is evidently manifest, both by sensible and rational Demonstration" (CG I.1)

This is very much of its age, and a form of discussion Traherne was familiar with. "God" is a "necessary Being" "evidently manifest" to man's "sensible and rational Demonstration". Theological propositions such as this are the near contemporary and by no means rare sources of statements like that made by Newton regarding "an intelligent Agent", "an intelligent and powerful Being" who "exists necessarily": this can appear as the abstracted "sensible" and "rational" assertion of the existence of a God the non-existence of whom was for the first time becoming a possibility that might one day be proved and that must therefore be dispassionately denied.[5] "God" must be affirmed by means of those faculties which are applied to the pursuit of the "new philosophy" or, alternatively, accepted as "given". Thus Newton, and thus Gale: "there must needs be an infinite wisdom that frames, orders and disposeth these things" because the very order of the universe "presupposeth a most sovereign intelligence and infinite wisdom" (CG I.5). There is a similar emphasis in Traherne: "I knew by the Perfection of the Work there was a GOD" (C III.17) for "nothing can be, but it exhibits a Dietie" (C II.24).

Also common to Newton, Traherne and other near-contemporaries is Gale's theory of God realising his existence through activity. This he announces in the context of a proposition of the circularity of man's communication with God, a notion also much used by Traherne ("The Circulation", M II.152-54; C I.5,40,88; III.63,100;IV.66,86). God is "the most pure, independent, and perfect Act, comprehending all Divine perfection . . . the first principle, and last end of all things: from whom all things at

first flow as from the Plenitude of Being: to whom they again have their refluxe, as rivers to the Ocean" (CG I.2). God is "the most pure, independent, and perfect Act" just as for Traherne he "is One infinit Act of KNOWLEDG and Wisdom . . . He is all Ey and all Ear" (C II.84), "All Act, Pure Act, a Simple Being. Whose Essence is to be, Whose Being is to be Perfect" (C III.63).[6] The idea of "refluxe, as rivers to the Ocean" connects not only with the theme of circulation but also with that of rivers, oceans, fountains and flowing in general again common to Traherne (C I.6,29,42;IV.84). This leads to the Platonic element in Gale's work: "ev'ry thing is more or lesse perfect, as it draws near to God [to prōton kalon], the first beauty and light; the great Archetype and original Idea of all good, as Plato stiles him, [idea tagatha]" (CG I.2).

Gale continues his reference to the importance of active self-realisation and contemplation ("to make something out of nothing, requires an active power", CG I.2) until what seems like a discrepancy between his thought and Traherne's appears: "God being one, pure Act, a simple, infinite Being, cannot be comprehended by a finite compound capacity" (CG I.3). Traherne does not conceive of man's Capacity as "finite", nor does God remain incomprehensible to it. The apparent divergence is, however, immediately negated by an emphasis that makes the correspondence between the work of Gale and Traherne still greater. "God cannot be truly apprehended but in his own light and workes" (CG I.3): by this means of apprehension alone can man's finite limitations be overcome. This is a more lucid explanation than Traherne gives of a notion that is inherent in

his work. For all his emphasis on the partial subjectivity of perception and man's ability to create or at least alone to fully realise the significance of the external world, it is clear that the extent to which this is possible is limited, that there are certain definite "ways of seeing" that must be adopted before anything can be "seen" at all. Ultimately, man's aim is not just to "see" by adopting one of the available perceptive outlooks but to "see rightly": he must see everything as an expression of God its creator and sustainer. When man does "see rightly" he participates in the same effort that God makes to sustain, to realise, created objects and the world at large. He thus makes an advance towards the Platonic goal of God-likeness. Gale is more explicit than Traherne about the origins of this activity, the making of "something out of nothing", the use of the "active power" of contemplation. God is apprehended in this way through "his own light and workes. Indeed, the knowledge of causes by their effects does comprehend the best, and most certain part of our Philosophy: how much lesse then may we presume to contemplate the first cause; the Father of lights save in his own light, shining in the book of Nature or Divine Revelation? (CG I.3). There is something of Bacon's thought even in this highly metaphysical debate: the discovery of causes from effects and from the "oracles" of God's "words" and "works". Gale and Bacon, unlike Traherne, remain hesitant about man's ability to contemplate "the first cause". Gale continues with a consideration of the scheme formulated by many seventeenth century writers as a notion of perception: "all knowledge supposeth some proportion betwixt the faculty and the object, in order to the reception of

its Idea, and image" (CG I.3). Traherne quotes Plato as the source of this same scheme: "as three Things are necessary to Vision, the Eye rightly prepared, the object conveniently seated, and Light to convey the Idea to the Eye; so there are three things required to compleat and perfect Intelligence, an understanding Eye, an Intelligible Object, and a Light intelligible in which to conceive it: Which last is GOD" (CE 41). The "Light" is the same as Gale's "light, shining in the book of Nature or Divine Revelation", by which man acquires the ability to "see rightly", to see all things as the creation and partial representation of God.

Gale places God at that point at which the "Eye", "Object" and "Light" converge in a Platonic unity:

> In God (who is pure Act) the intelligent, intellect, intelligible species, the act of understanding, and the thing understood are but one and the same. For God understandeth himself, and all things without himself which were, or are, or shall be, or may be, under any hypothesis as also the several . . . modes, orders, and respects of all things among themselves; and that not by species or abstract images received from the objects, but in the glasse of his own Divine Essence; not successively, but by one intuition, without discourse . . . God contemplating himself beholds in his Divine Essence or sufficiencie, by an act of simple intelligence, the eternal Archetype and Ideas of all things possible. (CG I.3)

Thus, as Plato asserts a usually anonymous "great Exemplar and image of all singulars" (CG I.4), so God can stand in this place. Then "the Divine Understanding and Decrees" will "be the first great Exemplar or original idea of all things made" (CG I.4): God is like the "Artificer" who has "an idea preexisting in his mind, according to which he frames and formes his work" (CG I.4). Both

Gale and Traherne suggest that man may participate in this activity, and himself have the relationship of an "Artificer" to the whole of God's creation: he must make things as images of God and have the "idea" of God "preexisting in his mind". For Traherne this involved becoming God-like. So for Gale man should achieve the same understanding as God, a "Divine understanding", and be able to see by "intuition, without discourse". This pure "act of simple intelligence" has parallels in Traherne, who speaks of "Liquid Clear Satisfactions . . . the Emanations of the Highest Reason" by which it may be possible to regain intuitive "natural" "Apprehensions" (C III.22). For Gale, Traherne and other Platonic writers, any ultimate "truth" will only be apprehended by first achieving this Platonic God-likeness. It is necessary to see why this is so.

Man cannot presume to know God by any "finite compound capacity" but only through God's "own light, shining in the book of Nature or Divine Revelation" (CG I.3). This is fundamental: "This whole Machine [the world, the universe] has some prints and footsteps of the wisdom and skill of this great Architect. There is not the most inconsiderable part of this great Universe, but has some beams of Divine Wisdom shining in it. The world is an universal Temple, wherein man may contemplate natural images, and pictures of Divine Wisdom and goodness. The Sun, Moon and Stars, yea this dul element of the earth, furnisheth us with some Divine Characters, ideas, and representations of eternal Wisdom" (CG I.4). It is not enough, however, simply to "contemplate natural images, and pictures of Divine Wisdom" passively: they must be seen actively, in a certain way, the "Objects" being taken in

by the "Eye" in the correct "Light", which must be studied. The key point is that there are "monstrous defects" in "Nature" (CG I.4) and in fallen man — in the fall, Gale says, man was "greatly wounded in his Intellectuals" (CG I.7). Thus it is impossible to "contemplate that natural Wisdom or objective light" without "a book of Grace" (CG I.7) or "Divine glorious raies of saving light and wisdom" (CG I.4). "Object", "Eye" and "Light" must all be in correct proportion in order to make possible the true apprehension of the world as an image of God. All do possess the quality by which "God contemplating himself beholds in his Divine Essence or sufficiencie, by an act of simple intelligence, the eternal Archetype and Ideas of all things possible". This simplicity or purity, in man that God-like "intuition", applied to "Object", "Eye" and "Light", is the means of overcoming "monstrous defects" in man and nature. Man needs to attune to this "simple intelligence" before his perceptions are at all clear, and before they can begin to lead him to God-likeness. While divine significance does inhere in created things it cannot be passively received. He too, in his own way, must acquire and recognise his own form of divine significance, the capacity to see and Enjoy this divine message through active realisation of it as part of a complete Platonic scheme. For Traherne this is represented by his attempt to regain by the "Highest Reason" the "Intuition" of childhood (C III.2). Both Traherne and Gale agree that once man recognises his Capacity to see the divinity of things and to Enjoy them to the full his range is illimited. This is the clue to God-likeness and "truth", and for Gale also the clue to an understanding of all "Arts and Sciences":

> As this Light of Nature or created Wisdom, which the Father of Lights has imprest upon the natures of things, is but the reflexe irradiation or shine of his eternal increated Wisdom; so all human Arts and Sciences, as gathered up into systems, or inherent in mens minds are but the reflexe ideas or images of that objective light, or internal law engraven upon the beings of things. For all Arts and Sciences (whether active or contemplative) are but general ideas or notions: and all notions are but . . . pictures and imitations of things: whence the regular use of all Arts, is to be . . . images, manifestations, or notices of things to the glasse of our understandings. So that look as those created ideas of light and wisdom which lie hid in the creature, are but the parelius or reflexe image of Divine wisdom, that eternal law, and original idea of all truth: So all Arts and Sciences are but the images or likenes of the things they relate unto.
>
> Whence it follows, that all human Arts and Sciences are but the beams and derivations from the Fountain of Lights, created ideas flowing from, and answering unto that one simple increated eternal idea of Divine wisdom; which shining forth in things, created, receives several forms, shapes, & denominations according to their respective natures & Operations: & thence being gathered up, by the inquisitive mind of man, under certain general rules and order, they become universal ideas or notions; and passe under the denomination of Arts and Sciences. (CG I.6-7).

Gale and Traherne evolve a complex Platonic pattern that functions to formulate a fundamental "truth" which is recognised as being antecedent to all created things but can be perceived by "an act of simple intelligence" that reveals a means to God-likeness, which itself is characterised by the "correct" relationship of "Object", "Eye" and "Light". When that state is achieved and the "one simple increated eternal idea" is apprehended, all "Arts and Sciences" will be open to understanding by the simple intuition of the God-like man: he will in a sense already understand them, in

essence at least. This state of intuitive truth is a Platonic goal that must be worked towards: it is a state of knowledge and a particular form of existence, a state of God-likeness in which man exercises a "simple" and absolute "intelligence" in relation to the essential "idea" of all the apparent objects of creation.

3. Isaac Barrow, The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor

The second important source of notes in the Commonplace Book is a sermon by Isaac Barrow, Fellow of Trinity College and at various times Professor of both Greek and Mathematics — he resigned the latter chair in favour of his pupil, Isaac Newton. A Fellow of the Royal Society since 1663, he had also been Professor of Geometry at Gresham College. His sermon on The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor was preached in London at St. Mary Spittal on Wednesday in Easter week, 1671: it is thus quite possible that Traherne was present, although the sermon soon become available in print. At that time Barrow had yet to become Master of Trinity (1672) and to publish his Lectiones Opticae (1674) which were revised for publication by Newton. Coleridge was to note the "verbal imagination" of Barrow's sermons,[7] and he was in many ways typical of the learned, ordained academic, a member of the Royal Society, whose knowledge of many disciplines and interest in contemporary science was allied to a thorough study of theology and an imaginative grasp of all manner of intellectual enquiry.

Traherne would probably not find the central moral of Barrow's sermon of any great interest. It is a conventional

reiteration of the "Duty" its title proclaims. Barrow's means of conveying this moral are original, however, and in manner comparable to some of the ideas and images found in Traherne's writing. Barrow takes "Bounty to the Poor" as a central index of a man's whole religious performance: it is a duty "near to the heart of Piety" (BP 42) and, as "the special Touchstone of Piety" (BP 61), an image of all other religious duties. "'Tis religious liberality that doth prove us to be serious and earnest in other religious performances" (BP 91). Barrow's discussion of "religious liberality" is framed in such a way as to ally him with the Cambridge Platonists, both in the sense of liberal and latitudinarian freedom of belief and action (a tendency to see good as good whatever promotes it) and in the sense of the high spiritual connections of ordinary moral actions. Traherne shares this. Barrow propounds the "Duty" of his title through images the vital emphasis of which is towards "dispersing", so that "Bounty" represents only one aspect of man's duty to "communicate" all manner of endowments to others. What is sought is "liberal communication" of all man's gifts in a form not unlike Traherne's notions of communion, communication and mutual participation — a genuine exchange not only of material but of spiritual values: by "liberal communication" man "disperseth his goods" and "sendeth them abroad for the use and benefit of others" (BP 7). As in Traherne, images of communication are associated with those of flowing: "We are but several streams issuing from one source" (BP 131). To be bountiful, Barrow says, is to be good to God, for he too is involved in dispersal and communication to and with man: "What is any being in the world, but an efflux of [God's]

bounty, and an argument of his liberality?" (BP 106). As "nothing is more conformable to Gods nature" than "beneficence and mercy" (BP 105-06), so man should also show these qualities and thus strive to become like God:

> Nature, (I say) Providence and Revelation, do all concur in testifying this, that there is nothing in God so peculiarly admirable, nothing (as it were) so God-like; that is, so highly venerable and amiable, as to do good and show mercy. We therefore by liberal communication to the needy, do most approach to the nature of God, and most exactly imitate his practice; acquiring to ourselves thereby somewhat of Divinity, and becoming little Gods to our Neighbour. (BP 107-08).

This is a restrained version of Traherne's emphases on man's ability and need to become God-like, a suggestion that may be further reinforced: God "cannot but cherish and treat them well, who are the fairest and truest images of himself; no spectacle can be so pleasant to him, as to see us in our practice to act himself, doing good to one another" (BP 110). This is further followed by a passage which would seem to confirm that there is in fact very close correspondence between the thought of Barrow and Traherne in this respect: man, Barrow says,

> within himself containeth a nature very excellent; an immortal soul, and an intelligent mind, by which he nearly resembleth God himself, and is comparable to Angels; he invisibly is owner of endowments, rendring him capable of the greatest and best things . . . he was born a Prince . . . was framed and constituted Lord of the visible World; had all the goodly brightnesses of Heaven, and all the costly furnitures of earth, created to serve him: . . . Yea, he was made an inhabitant of Paradise, and Possessour of felicities superlative. (BP 114-17).

Unlike Traherne, however, Barrow stresses the Biblical fall rather than the individual "Apostasie" (C III.2); but man must still use all his faculties to strive for the re-establishment of a state he once enjoyed, naturally and by right:

> as all men are in faculties and endowments of nature equal, so were they all originally equal in condition . . . all constituted in a most prosperous and plentiful estate; all things at first were promiscuously exposed to the use and enjoyment of all, every one from the common stock assuming as his own what he needed. Inequality and private interest in things . . . were the by-blows of our fall: sin introduced these degrees and distances; it devised the names of rich and poor; it begot those ingrossings and enclosures of things; it forged those two small pestilent words, meum and tuum, which have engendered so much strife among men, and created so much mischief in the world. (BP 120-21).

The accumulation of wealth only leads to a situation where man "doth pervert that equity which God hath established in things" (BP 126) and abuses other men because, as "every man is not only our Brother, but (as Aristotle saith of a friend) [allos autos], another one's self" (BP 133), so "every man hath still a competent patrimony due to him, and a sufficient provision made for his tolerable subsistence" (BP 123).

Although the fall is stressed it is held within an optimistic and essentially benevolent view of things: Barrow's image of the world remains close to Traherne's earthly paradise. What he points in this sermon is the necessity of maintaining the paradisal aspect of things by a constant practice of "Bounty" and all the other virtue of which it is an image, aiming always to imitate God and thus "acquiring to ourselves thereby somewhat of divinity". In the dutiful practice of bounty to the poor, Barrow asserts, men

are capable of "acquiring . . . somewhat of divinity, and becoming little gods". Men truly can "approach to the nature of God" and "imitate his practice": they are already "the fairest and truest images of himself" and all men are born "capable of the greatest and best things". Each man is "framed and constituted lord of the visible world". Barrow's view of man in the world is almost identical to that of Traherne: "he was made an inhabitant of paradise, and Possessour of felicities superlative" with, ideally and originally, "all things . . . promiscuously exposed to the use and enjoyment of all". His only problem is the best use of his faculties and endowments and the best ends towards which these should be directed. In The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor Barrow expounds a philosophy of activity and communication: man must "practice" and "act" like God and himself seek to be truly "godlike", to attain once more the "felicities" he once enjoyed, and may again enjoy, as "an inhabitant of paradise".

4. The Divine Pymander

Under many of the headings in the Commonplace Book there are quotations from The Divine Pymander, John Everard's translation of part of the Hermetic corpus. This translation, first published in 1650, has contact with the political and religious beliefs of several groups of interregnum radicals. Everard (1575-c.1650) translated several mystical and Platonic works and held a magical belief in the divinity of man and nature. He had been imprisoned as a heretic but was admired by John Webster among other interregnum reformers.[8] The Hermetic idea of the magus, the

divine man possessing absolute and special spiritual authority, chosen to command, to lead ordinary men to a better life and true salvation — to reveal a special "light" to the world — was echoed in other radical ideas and heresies during and just after the Civil Wars. The Hermetic magus also, and particularly in The Divine Pymander, achieves his God-like state through knowledge and appreciation of God's works, creation, all "the things that are" (DP I.2). This idea found favour with later natural philosophers. Thomas Sprat said that natural philosophers should be conversant with "all the objects of men's thoughts: which can be nothing else, but either God, or Man, or Nature" (HRS 81). The Divine Pymander states that "There can be no Religion more true or just then to know the things that are" (DP I.2): these being "First, God; Secondly, the World; Thirdly, Man" (DP I.25). For Traherne too, "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF. All Things" are "the Objects of your Felicity" (C II.100). Among other natural philosophers, Robert Boyle actually read The Divine Pymander in Everard's translation and quoted "Hermes Trismegistus" as a sound philosopher (UEP 53). The idea of the Hermetic magus, achieving God-likeness through his knowledge of creation, is highly sympathetic to the philosophies of Sprat and Boyle as well as to Traherne.

More than 200 paragraphs from The Divine Pymander are quoted in the Commonplace Book. Many of these appear as direct transcriptions in Chapter 28 of Christian Ethicks, "Of Magnanimity". Traherne seems to have found in the Hermetic writings a very close correspondence to his own philosophy: his extended direct quotation suggests that he offered this as confirmation or analogy

rather than as a source for his own thought. The name "Pymander", or more usually "Poemander", stands as a heading to the first book of the Hermetica but was frequently taken to be the title of the whole work, often thought to be by the mythical "Hermes Trismegistus".[9] The ~~presumptuve~~ presumptive title may derive from the Greek [poieō], to make, produce or create (the source of the word "poet", or "maker") and from [aner, andros], man: the text itself suggests this as an appropriate etymology, for it is concerned with both the creation of man by God and, effectively, with the creation of God by man. This continual circularity (God makes man, man makes God) is an essential feature of the book and an interesting reflection on Traherne's own theory of "The Circulation" (M II.152-54) and on his whole attitude to God, man and the world.

The ideas of The Divine Pymander, much quoted by Traherne, may be examined here as close parallels for Traherne's own thought. Book One begins by asserting that "There can be no Religion more true or just, than to know the things that are; and to acknowledge thanks for all things to him that made them" (DP I.2), There are three aspects to knowledge of "the things that are " ("First, God; Secondly, the World; Thirdly, Man", DP I.25) all of which participate in a system of circulation or communication: "The World for Man, Man for God". Man has two souls, the "Sensible" soul which is mortal, and the "Reasonable" soul which links him to the divine order: "The Minde in God. Reasoning (or, disputing, or discovering) in Man. Reason in the Minde" (DP I.37-39). "Communication", "Participation" and "Circulation" are important notions here as in Traherne. In the Hermetic scheme man participates, by ~~may~~ way of his reason, in the "Minde", an aspect of God. This state

is realised in a physical sense in the parallel existence of the world to that of "Minde" — both are shared by God and man.

In Book Two begins a vision in which "Pimander" ("Poemander", the "Minde", the "Light", "God") comes before the author, who asks for knowledge about "the things that are". "And I saw an infinite sight, all things were become light" (DP II.4). Man has "power of all things", God decreeing that he should learn "all things that are": this is a necessary motive for gratitude. "Blessed are thou O Father, thy man would be satisfied with thee, as thou hast given him all power" (DP II.98). The "Son" is the "Word from the Minde" and was separated from the "Father" because the "Workman . . . would needs also himself fall to work". This stress on work, creation, activity, much emphasized by Traherne, becomes more explicit: God's "Operation or Act, is his Will, and his Essence, to will all things to be" (DP IV.4). The world, all things, "appears", and God "appears" in all things. They are not actually made, but, as it were, made to appear: "in fantasie [God] fantasieth all things, or in appearance he maketh them appear" (DP V.6). God thus "appears" throughout the whole world, just as he makes the whole of this itself "appear", so "if thou wilt see him, consider and understand the Sun, consider the course of the Moon, consider the order of the Stars" (DP V.13). God "being himself the onely Workman, he is always in Work, himself being that which he doth or maketh" (DP X.98).

God exists (appears) and makes things exist (appear) by his activity, by making appearances. Man possesses complementary potentials and can participate at all levels in the divine activity: "the beams of God are operations; and the beams of the

World are Natures; and the beams of Man are Arts and Sciences" (DP IV.80). "Man is a Divine living thing"; "an Earthly man, is a mortal God; and . . . the heavenly God, is an immortal Man" (DP IV.89-90; quoted by Traherne, CE 225). Like God, man must make things appear, and himself appear as an image of God. The system suggests that concepts such as "man" and "God" are manipulated as images rather than discussed as facts: while "man" and the "world" are part of the "One" (DP IV.94) the continual circulation of the three elements in the scheme (God, world and man) means that it becomes difficult to propose any fixity at all. The circulation becomes literal and complete, and no single hierarchical order emerges. "God is not intelligible to himself; for not being any other thing from that which is understood, he cannot be understood by himself" (DP IX.22): God is understood, known, only by man, who becomes, literally, like God — "the Sense and Understanding of the World is One, in that it makes all things, and unmakes them again into it self, for it is the Organ or Instrument of the Will of God" (DP XIII.31). "Sense", "Understanding", whether of God or man, is always the same, a property of the "Minde" behind which is God but in which man participates. Ultimately all elements in the scheme are subsumed into the concept of the "One", an absolute unity of all; at once the whole of existence, all existents, and the negation of the possibility of existence, which are only the product of the activity of the separated aspects of the "One" as they strive for oneness.

The foundations of the philosophy are laid less in the three-fold division of being (God, world and man) than in the

all-pervading constants like the mind, the soul, wisdom and knowledge, which are available to either God or man in their mutual participations. The sum of these constants becomes a Platonic "Oneness", and it is in this that the three elements act and may be said to exist by this action — not in "God", a notional being having existence only as the result of activity within the larger, all-inclusive Platonic scheme. "Oneness" is equally attainable by God or man: it is available to anyone capable of filling his individual mind with knowledge and apprehensions of things and thoughts to an ultimate degree of all-inclusiveness where all beings attaining this state, the Platonic ideal realised, become identical, become simply "One". They are identical because absolute and complete, whether decribed, nominally, as "God" or "man".

Traherne says, in Christian Ethicks, that "Trismegistus (or whoever else was the Author of that Book)" (CE 230) saw the "deep Capacity" of the soul but did not understand its end. Traherne's thought, though, implies a system similar to that found in the Hermetic writings, where ideas of God, the world and man are only parts of a larger scheme in which ultimates are discussed rather as states of knowing, being, thinking or feeling than as actual physical existents. This position arises out of the difficulties and ambiguities which surround the idea of "God" when it is insisted that man is capable of becoming God-like in a complete sense, that he is truly and thoroughly the image of God. Traherne quotes the Hermetic scheme of God, world and man and the idea of man as "a divine and living thing" comparable only "to them that are above . . . that are called Gods. Nay rather . . . he that is

a MAN INDEED is above them!" for "an Earthly Man is a Mortal God, and the Heavenly GOD is an Immortal MAN" (CE 225). The Hermetic writings suggest that, in so far as all things are, finally, mental realisations ("Thoughts and Intellections", CE 228), it may be true to say that if God made man, then man made God. There is considerable evidence to suggest that Traherne would endorse some similar emphasis on man's Capacity. He quotes, for example, a further passage from the Hermetic writings that is very close to his own thought: "If . . . thou wilt not equal thyself to GOD, thou canst not understand GOD . . . If thou believe in thy self that nothing is impossible, but accountest thy self Immortal, and that thou canst understand all things, every Art, every Science, and the manner and custom of every living thing . . . thou maist . . . understand GOD" (CE 226-27). Man may, or must, know everything, the one condition of his knowledge being that he must know in the right manner, must see everything as the creation of and as a means towards knowing God, the ultimate good of which man is capable of conceiving. "Magnanimity", in Chapter 28 of Christian Ethicks, is "all that belongs to a Great Soul . . . an infinite Hope; and a vast Desire; a Divine, profound, uncontrollable sence of ones own Capacity" (CE 224). By knowing all things "in the strait and divine Way", "the Soul will by that means be . . . the Temple of the God-head . . . then it must needs be present with all things in Heaven, and in the Earth, and in the Sea, as GOD is: for all things will be in it, as it were, by Thoughts and Intellections" (CE 228). Man, filled with these "Thoughts and Intellections" of "the things that are", of "All Things" "the Objects of . . . Felicity" (C II.100), will

become God-like, will become God.

5. The Early Notebook and De Augmentis Scientiarum

The Commonplace Book is the most useful adjunct among unpublished materials to the more central Traherne texts, but even with this inherently interesting and highly organised manuscript the benefits obtained from a study of the sources rather in their own right than exclusively as they are treated by Traherne are considerable. The manuscript is valuable in itself, for certain sections serve to focus central aspects of Traherne's thought, and his list of headings, under which the notes are disposed, is itself a neat index of his preoccupations. A wider intellectual scope can however be perceived by turning to the sources of the notes. The evidence in the Early Notebook for Traherne's reaction to what it would be useful to regard as a potent intellectual influence, Francis Bacon's De Augmentis Scientiarum (1623) is, initially at least, somewhat disappointing. There are, however, interesting observations to be made about Traherne's relation to this book. Traherne made extensive notes on Bacon's work less than forty years after its publication, probably soon after taking his B.A. degree at Oxford in 1656. These notes follow some representative undergraduate notes and occupy a significant proportion of the notebook: 101 pages are devoted to the notes from Bacon's work, 48 pages to the other subjects.

The fragmentary style of annotation common to the Early Notebook continues through most of the section from the De Augmentis. There is occasional evidence of a more thorough

reaction on Traherne's part to Bacon's text, however. Bacon's discussion of "Philosophia Prima" prompts an extended comment from Traherne:

> General learning & Philosophia Prima, is as it were the Aquarum scaturigines which nourisheth & repletes all the other fountainnes & streams, or rivers of any particular sciences & without a supply from that the other will quickly wax drie . . . As there is Aurea Catena Virtutum so is there likewise Scientiarum. Noe one vertue can be in the mind unlesse attended with the whole Chore nor one science enthroned in the soule unlesse honoured by all the other Attendants.
> (EN 102).

Bacon mentions "Philosophia Prima" towards the end of Book One of De Augmentis, where he regrets the decline of "universality" among philosophers: "after the distribution of particular arts and sciences, men have abandoned universality, or philosophia prima; which cannot but cease and stop all progression. For no perfect discovery can be made upon a flat or level: neither is it possible to discover the more remote and deeper parts of any science, if you stand but upon the level of the same science, and ascend not to a higher science" (WFB III.292). It is interesting that this is almost the only point which draws an explicit comment from Traherne, one which indicates his agreement with Bacon as to the lack of "universality" among contemporaries. Traherne would seem to acknowledge the need for learning of a "Philosophia Prima", an idea which suits his generalised attitude to all intellectual pursuits and his continual search for the infinite in all things. In some respects "universality" is a characteristic revived by the virtuosi of the later seventeenth century, and could, for example, be used to designate the

activities of the Royal Society, attempting to mount a newly researched and perceived view of things; and of Newton, who not only did produce a new view of, literally, the universe, but also engaged in a serious and experimental study of alchemy as part of his hope for providing both a more scientific or quasi-scientific gloss to the spiritual affirmations rather uncomfortably attached to his material system and a complete account of creation in all aspects.[10] His may be seen as one particularly successful attempt among many to give a universal account of all things. Traherne's affirmation that "Logick, Ethicks, Physicks, Metaphysicks, Geometry, Astronomy, Poesie, Medicine, Grammer, Musick, Rhetorick, all kind of Arts Trades and Mechanismes that Adorned the World pertained to felicity" (C III.36) is part of his individual contribution to a "Philosophia Prima". His own search for "universality" — already touched upon in an examination of The Court of the Gentiles and The Divine Pymander and their relation to Traherne's thought — can be further discussed at a later stage, particularly in relation to Bacon's definition of "Metaphysic".

Traherne's early reading of Bacon's De Augmentis seems preoccupied with the abstraction of convenient aphoristic phrases from Bacon's text. These literal notes may often have little obvious relevance to what might otherwise be perceived as Bacon's main argument, and only in relation to "Philosophia Prima" does Traherne begin to practice something like the mental and imaginative re-organisation that was applied to the sources of the Commonplace Book. It is still, however, too easy to ignore the fact of Traherne's having read De Augmentis closely. Margoliouth,

in his now standard edition of Traherne texts, did not identify the notes in the Early Notebook as being from Bacon (M I.xx-xxii: he calls this "Philip Traherne's Notebook" although he recognised that most of the notes were written by Thomas). The notes themselves do not provide a framework upon which to mount a discussion of Bacon's thought as it appears in Traherne's work, but it is still necessary to stress that Traherne was exposed to the intellectually re-orientating experience of a reading of De Augmentis and to see what materials and ideas were thus available to him. Even that he was motivated to undertake this reading — particularly at Oxford in the 1650's — is significant, not least because the fact that he was so motivated would seem to be largely incompatible with many of the modern critical assumptions that are made about Traherne's work. It is possible to offer here something of an abstract of the text made with some attention to, or at least experience of, Traherne's later writing. Only through such a reconstitutive approach can use be made of what promises to be valuable material: otherwise discussion would be hampered by the fragmentary nature of the notes, and by the existence of several blank spaces in the manuscript (EN 77-85, 104-113). These are interesting in themselves, and could be said to indicate that Traherne intended to return to his study of De Augmentis at a later date. This is conjecture. However, while one blank space would account for the omission of notes on part of Bacon's discussion of the errors of learning and the dignity of true learning (EN 104-113; WFB III.293 ff.), the other would otherwise cover Bacon's discussion of man's thirst for knowledge, God's intention that man should study His works, the pursuit of knowledge to the right end, and the

tendency of learning to increase devotion to God (EN 77-85; WFB III.269-273). In the context of Traherne's later writing it would seem that these omissions are due to a heightening rather than a lack of interest on Traherne's part, an interest that he may have intended to fulfil by particularly close attention to these passages at a later date.

The most interesting book of De Augmentis for the purposes of this study, and the one to which Traherne gave most attention in his notes, is the first.[11] In speaking of the "intellectual re-orientation" likely to be the result of a reading of Bacon, it is possible to begin discussion in general terms. When Traherne uses words like "truth" and "reason" critics seem inclined to half-ignore the usual weight of these and accept them — or even tolerate them — as Traherne's attempts to apply a quasi-philosophical gloss to his "mystical insight". Such words may have more importance and a more philosophical emphasis, however. The whole purpose of the Centuries is seen by Traherne as the communication of "Truths": "I will fill [this book] with . . . Truths . . . with those Truths which . . . shall shew my Lov: To you, in Communicating most Enriching Truths; to Truth, in Exalting Her Beauties in such a Soul" (C I.1). "Truths" here are "religious" or "spiritual", but they may be reinforced by a deeply thought sense of these "Truths" as part of a whole individual philosophy, the end of which is the Felicity which both the Centuries and Christian Ethicks aim to teach. It may indeed be possible that what seems now to be accepted as an inherent difference between the truths of "science" and experiment and the truths of "religion" or philosophical speculation may, in the seventeenth century,

simply not have existed in men's minds. "Experimental Natural Philosophy", for example, would be open not only to microscopical and telescopical examination of nature but also to the theory and motivation behind such research into God's creation. Thomas Sprat was to see the concerns of the "Natural Philosopher" as extensions of those of the "Moral" philosopher (HRS 33). Traherne speaks of "Reason" as of "Truth" (and in conventional literary history his older contemporary Dryden is often cast as the precursor of the "Age of Reason"): "Reason is a transcendent faculty, which extendeth to all Objects, and penetrates into all misteries" (CE 109). "Reason" may be seen as "transcendent" and to be concerned with "misteries", but these it "penetrates" as it "extendeth to all Objects". More important is the use of "Reason" at, for Traherne, a vital point of argument: "if we cannot see some Reason in his ways, we are apt to suspect there is no Deity" (CE 34). "Reason" is here proposed as a universal abstract faculty apparently antecedent to "God". Traherne's more usual and general proposition is of a Platonically conceived faculty of which God may be regarded as the ultimate or ideal realisation but in which man is capable of participation: "I easily perceiv that my Soul was made to live in Communion with GOD, in all Places of his Dominion, and to be satisfied with the Highest Reason in all Things" (C III.18). Within this conception, however, there remains room for a notion of "Reason" as a dominant characteristic and impulse in all human activity: "Reason, which is the formal Essence of the Soul of Man, guides Him to desire those Things which are absolutely supreme" (CE 14). It is by the "Highest Reason", in fact, that Traherne seeks

Felicity (C III.2).

"Truth" and "Reason" are the constantly reiterated themes of Bacon's work and, for him, the aim of all philosophy: "books, such as are worthy the name of books, ought to have no patrons but truth and reason" (WFB III.281). In suggesting that there is more to Traherne's use of these words than is commonly recognised his albeit early reading of Bacon provides the best ground upon which to prospect for a philosophical depth that is otherwise realisable only through isolated analysis of the writing itself. While a direct relation of "influence" cannot, and need not, be established, there is room for an adjustment of awareness of Traherne's writing in relation to that of Bacon.

In Book One of De Augmentis Bacon's own concerns define themselves only against a background of current "vanities" of learning, the three main "vanities" being "fantastical learning", "contentious learning" and "delicate learning" (WFB III.282). He discusses these in reverse order.

Firstly, Bacon's analysis of "delicate learning" emerges as an attack on the misuse of rhetoric, itself an "affectionate study of eloquence and copie of speech" which can be used "to clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy with sensible and plausible elocution" but when excessive tends "rather towards copie than weight" so that "men study words and not matter" (WFB III.283-84). Bacon's position becomes clear. He has "truth" to communicate, and he intends to do this without interference from words which have no "reason". For him "words are but the images of matter; and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture" (WFB III.284).

Excessive attention to words leads to a state where what for Bacon is a means of expression available to him as a transparent reflection of his "truth" becomes an end in itself. Advanced rhetoric is "capable of no divineness" and becomes a hindrnace to "the severe inquisition of truth, and the deep progress in philosophy" (WFB III.284). Language has a purely functional aspect for "the more severe and laborious sort of inquirers into truth" (WFB III.284) and other than as an adornment words, "images", have little use for philosophy beyond a certain indeterminate level of plain "expression". Philosophy itself can be seen in these terms as the pursuit of "truth" by the means of "reason", a "deep progress" by "severe inquisition", the results of which become constituted primally in the philosopher's mind without awareness of linguistic formulation. Bacon does not distinguish between words which do have "life of reason" and those which are merely "images", but it is clear that, as he claims to use it, language has the simple function of the expression of a "truth" which remains outside and is constituted before discourse but can be directly and precisely transferred into discourse and communicated in an exact representation of this "truth". Once the philosopher's mind has conducted its "severe inquisition" neither it nor the philosopher himself are seen to play any real part in the discourse presented to the reader.

For Bacon, then, a sequence from objects to thoughts to words should be direct and, it would seem, this cannot be short-circuited by language, if it is properly used. When excessive attention is paid to language, however, this can produce uncertainty in the objects—thoughts—words sequence because the progression from the

first to the last of these may be reversed if some weight is allowed to language other than that of plain "expression" or "description" ("decoration" would be the first step away from this simple aim): thoughts might be determined by language rather than by "severe inquisition" of objects. Bacon may have recognised aspects of language that are beyond the merely instrumental, but he refused to acknowledge these. He could not acknowledge them, for to do so would undermine the aims he pursued in his work. He admits elsewhere, in the analysis of the "idols" of the human world, only that "words plainly force and overrule the understanding, and throw all into confusion, and lead men away into numberless and empty controversies and idle fancies".[12] Thus language must be kept in its place, as an instrumental tool, a means of direct communication. Man must dominate language and not run the risk of being dominated by it. Recent analysis, however, has shown the extent to which Bacon himself was subject to what might be termed the constitutive powers of language and writing. One modern critic traces the determining use of dominant organisational and structural patterns, rhetorical and aphoristic devices, classically derived syntactical symmetry, and imagistic (the image sometimes running ahead and determining the thought) and argumentative patterns, the latter derived from Bacon's experience in law and parliament.[13] This is to see Bacon writing imaginatively rather than rigorously in a career much concerned with persuasion. It has been said that "his mind did not go on to grasp firmly a world which lent itself to mathematical treatment; instead, it clung to a whole mode of apprehension that would ordinarily be called more poetical".[14] "Induction becomes for him not so much a

useful mechanism for the discovery of certain limited axioms, but rather a mystic path, an ultimate revelation and a millenial hope":[15] "the whole end of his philosophy is a non-rational vision of man's unlimited capacity to dominate the universe".[16] While Bacon sets out to establish the rigorous and "objective" principles of a new knowledge, learning or science, his argument can be analysed as being itself determined by his own preoccupations and practices. He cannot, ultimately, force language to be merely instrumental, and so it remains "subjective" and is as much constitutive in Bacon's writing as in more particularly "literary" work.

In De Augmentis Bacon's attention focusses secondly on "contentious learning". It is interesting that the Traherne notebook containing his most scholastic studies should also evince his reading of one of the most famous attacks on the "Schoolmen", for it is their learning that Bacon exemplifies as "contentious":

> This kind of degenerate learning did chiefly reign amongst the schoolmen; who having sharp and strong wits, and abundance of leisure, and small variety of reading; but their wits being shut up in the cells of a few authors (chiefly Aristotle their dictator), as their persons were shut up in the cells of monasteries and colleges; and knowing little history, either of nature or time; did out of no great quantity of matter, and infinite agitation of wit, spin out unto us those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books. For the wit of man, if it work upon the matter which is the contemplation of the creatures of God, worketh according to the stuff, and is limited thereby; but if it work upon itself, as the spider worketh his web, then it is endless, and brings forth indeed cobwebs of learning, admirable for the fineness of the thread and work, but of no substance or profit.
> (WFB III.285-86).

In short, "vain learning is worse than vain words" (WFB III.285), "contentious learning" a greater threat to the philosopher than "delicate learning". Again the fundamental concern is for "truth": the Schoolmen's method "rests not so much upon evidence of truth proved by arguments, authorities, similitudes, examples [the "deep progress" by "severe inquisition"], as upon particular confutations and solutions of every scruple, cavillation and objection" (WFB III.286-87). The "generalities of the schoolmen are for a while good and proportionable; but when you descend into the distinctions and decisions, instead of a fruitful womb for the use and benefit of man's life, they end in monstrous altercations and barking questions" (WFB III.286-87). Any inclination to "monstrous altercations" is deliberately shunned by Traherne (C I.4), although he is inclined more to "generalities" than to "distinctions and decisions". One critic has however noted "a utilitarian emphasis, transfigured yet discernable in the mystic's doctrine of felicity".[17] The notion that the philosopher's "deep inquisition" reveals "a fruitful womb for the use and benefit of man's life" might find an echo in Traherne's concern for "Use" and "Services" (CE 182) which, together with his notions of "Fruition" and "Prizing" are seen as part of the process of understanding and appreciation that is Enjoyment and leads to Felicity. "Fruition", the realisation of "the use and benefit of man's life", perhaps, is sought in the progress towards Felicity, so man should "grasp at . . . fruition, with a faint kind of Promise, that it shall at last be ours" (CE 122). "Fruition" does have a connected stress on the "subjective" activity of the mind (in conjunction, at least, with "the

contemplation of the creatures of God"), but, as Traherne sees man's life in terms of intellectual Capacity, "Fruition" is the recognition and realisation of objects as they are useful and serviceable in man's progress towards Felicity, a state of thorough human fulfilment and intellectual repletion. Bacon attacks the "laborious webs" of the Schoolmen's intellectual wrangling and proclaims a plain "truth". The Schoolmen, he claims, "in the inquiry of divine truth", "leave the oracle of God's word and . . . vanish in the mixture of their own inventions, [and] so in the inquisition of nature they ever left the oracle of God's works and adored the deceiving and deformed images which the unequal mirror of their own minds or a few received authors did represent unto them" (WFB III.287). Traherne's position can be seen as a compromise. He is as much concerned as Bacon with the "oracles" of God's words and works, but he places a continual emphasis on the importance of his own mind without which neither of these could be realised (fully known, or made real). "Truth" for him is neither given nor absolute, but is rather a (Platonic) state of mind or being that can be worked towards, actively and mentally, and to which study of God's words and works contributes. For him what Bacon calls "divine truth" and the "inquisition of nature" are parts of one effort to attain a greater "truth" (which Traherne might call God-likeness or Felicity), an effort which is made "subjectively" and demands the perception or perceptive appropriation by the subject (the "Infant-Ey", M II.86-87; or, later, the "Ey of Reason", C I.25) in a particular manner (as a means towards understanding and towards God) of what Bacon proposes as "objective" knowledge, the

"truth" of which, for Bacon, exists outside man's world (it exists whether there is language, a name for it, or not). To Bacon this "truth" is available for direct translation into his world by the use of reasoning and discriminatory powers, by a "true" reflection rather than an appropriative mental exercise and active realisation. There is less a difference of manner than of degree, the degree to which "inquisition" (—perception, —mental realisation) remains "rigorous" and "objective". Traherne emphasizes its "subjectivity" from the first ("An Object Seen, is in the Faculty seeing it, and by that in the Soul of the Seer, after the Best of Maners", C I.100) while Bacon's work attains some of its power from the dedication with which he pursues its ultimately elusive "objectivity".

This different approach to the means and methods of perception should not obscure a more positive correspondence in the attitudes of Bacon and Traherne. Bacon says that "the mind of man" should be directed towards "the contemplation of the creatures of God", and he implies that the twin "oracles" of God's words and works should be the main preoccupations of the philosopher. Traherne, like Bacon in his critique of the Schoolmen and their "laborious webs of learning", rejects written authority for its own sake — the "Ey of Reason" seeks to recapture the intuitive insight and perception of the "Infant Ey" on the principles of the "Highest Reason" (C III.22). In this process thorough and fundamental emphasis is placed on the "contemplation of GODS Works" (C II.3) and on "Diligent inquisition into all Natures" (C III.44). Traherne is inclined to deism, for it is the created world which is for him the best

indication of the attributes of God: scriptural evidence seems secondary to this. He accepts scriptural authority but not without question: it is the material world rightly perceived that provides him with over-abundant evidence of its truth. It is in the material world that Traherne finds the most convincing and the most stimulating evidence of God's attributes; "the contemplation of the creatures of God", of the "oracle" of God's works, and consideration of "the oracle of God's word" are complementary. Bacon feared the results of this attitude. For him the truths of God's works, scientific truth, were not the same as the truths of God's words, theological truth. Both were true, but in ultimately incompatible ways, and if they were held as parts of one inclusive truth this would be insecure and uncertain, possibly invalid. His argument has been seen in terms of a philosophical problem concerning a conflict between "reason" and "faith".[18] For Traherne, as for the Cambridge Platonists,[19] both would seem to be valid within a system based on the mutual confirmation of works and words when "contemplated" by the mind capable of perceiving or realising, actively and "subjectively", the "truth" that is to be drawn from them.

Thirdly, in De Augmentis, after "vain words" and "vain matter", Bacon examines the most dangerous of the vanities, "untruth" itself, the condemnation of which brings about Bacon's most explicit statement of his attitude to "truth": "the essential form of knowledge . . . is nothing but a representation of truth: for the truth of being and the truth of knowing are one, differing no more than the direct beam and the beam reflected" (WFB III.287). Hence the importance of learning, the task of which is to uncover

and represent (as in a mirror) an absolute and original "truth", which comes directly from either of God's "oracles". Bacon admits that the "end or pretences" of "Astrology, Natural Magic, and Alchemy" are "noble", but cites them as central examples of sciences which "have had better intelligence and confederacy with the imagination of man than with his reason" (WFB III.289) — they are not representations of "truth", to which man's "reason" is the means. "Truth" and "reason": Bacon argues, continually and thoroughly, for their establishment as the end and means of philosophy and learning. Man's task, he insists, is the representation or disclosure of "truth" (whether theological or natural) by innate and neutral discriminatory powers (by "severe inquisition") without colouring or distortion from his own mind; the reflection of an absolute and primal "reality".

This is not Traherne's attitude. For him objects known are fully realised and constituted only in the mind of the knowing subject. "An Object Seen, is in the Faculty seeing it, and by that in the soul of the Seer, after the Best of Maners . . . Dead Things are in a Room containing them in a vain maner; unless they are Objectivly in the soul of a Seer" (C I.100). Traherne is very nearly an idealist. Yet for all the difference it is possible to see some common impulse behind Bacon's definition of "truth" and its agents and objects, and Traherne's search for Felicity by means of Enjoyment. Perhaps this is simply because they both share impulses common to much if not all philosophy. If, however, Traherne can be considered as a philosopher in the company of Bacon this essay has more than achieved its aim. Bacon measures learning as it contributes to "the disclosing of nature" or the

"uses of man's life" (WFB III.289). Traherne might measure experience by the same criteria, as the first is synonymous with knowledge of God through his creation and the second, in its fullest sense, with Felicity, man's ultimate good. "Truth" for Traherne has as deliberate an emphasis as it has for Bacon, but his definition would be very different (neither actually attempts a definition): something like "those thoughts and intellections experienced in relation to God and his creation by any creature that has achieved God-likeness". His writing seeks the way to God-likeness. Bacon's "truth" might be "that which is evident and constant to the mind of the reasoning man". His writing is an exposition of the reasoning process. Man's reason acts as a reflecting mirror for the truth Bacon's philosopher discovers by inquiry. Traherne's truth is a state of mind and needs a mental formulation to produce an active realisation of what are otherwise "Dead Things" — truth inheres not in the things themselves but in the mind of the "Seer" when engaged in contemplation of them. This active realisation, the almost literal creation of the perceived objects in their true context and significance, requires an effort of mind different to that involved in Bacon's more passive, discriminatory reflection of that which is found out by "inquisition".

A form of "universality", it has been suggested here, is part of Traherne's striving for Felicity. As the Hermetic Platonism studied by Traherne requires that the potentially God-like soul fills itself with knowledge, "Thoughts and Intellections", of all things, thus making itself "divine" in knowledge and experience, so Bacon requires that the philosopher should make himself open to all aspects of learning, the root of which must be "truth". Both of

these views can be contained within Traherne's attitude to human aspiration and endeavour — his idea of man's Capacity and "Insatiableness" — and both permit the abstraction of a Platonic scheme which is fundamentally similar in structure. Bacon's discussion of "Metaphysic" in De Augmentis is in fact conducted in terms of a Platonic ascent from "lower" to "higher" forms of knowledge:

> it is the duty and virtue of all knowledge to abridge the circuits and long ways of experience (as much as truth will permit), and to remedy the ancient complaint that "life is short and art is long". And this is best performed by collecting and uniting the axioms of sciences into more general ones, and such as may comprehend all individual cases. For knowledges are as pyramids, whereof history and experience are the bases. And so of Natural Philosophy the basis is Natural History; the stage next the basis is Physic; the stage next the vertical point is Metaphysic. As for the cone and vertical point ("the work which God worketh from the beginning to the end", namely, the summary law of nature) it may fairly be doubted whether man's inquiry can attain to it. But these three are the true stages of knowledge . . . to those who abasing themselves refer all things to the glory of God, they are as the three acclamations: Holy, Holy, Holy. For God is holy in the multitude of his works, holy in the order of them, and holy in the union of them. And therefore the speculation was excellent in Parmenides and Plato . . . "that all things by a certain scale ascend to unity". So then always that knowledge is worthiest which least burdens the intellect with multiplicity; and this appears to be Metaphysic, as that which considers chiefly the simple forms of things (which I have above termed forms of the first class); since although few in number, yet in their commensurations and co-ordinations they make all this variety. The second respect which ennobles this part of Metaphysic, is that it enfranchises the power of men to the widest and most extensive field of operation. For Physic carries men in narrow and restrained ways, imitating the ordinary flexuous courses of Nature; but the ways of the wise are everywhere broad; to wisdom (which was anciently defined to

> be the knowledge of things divine and human)
> there is ever abundance and variety of means.
> (WFB IV.361-62).

In Bacon's terms Traherne might be called a metaphysician, capable in his own way of "deep progress" as he himself saw the importance of "Diligent inquisition" (C III.44) and sought "the greatest liberty . . . and most extensive field of operation" for his intellectual realisation of man's Capacity. Near the point of the pyramid of knowledges Bacon's own definitions begin to cloud, for "it may . . . be doubted whether man's inquiry can attain to" "the work which God worketh from the beginning to the end". In The Divine Pymander God is defined as "the onely Workman, . . . always in Work, himself being that which he doth or maketh" (DP X.98) and it is in this work which Traherne says man must strive to participate as he seeks to realise his own Felicity. If it could be allowed, as the Hermetic writings and Traherne allow, that man most certainly could attain to this, would not Bacon's notion of "the truth of being and the truth of knowing" being one mean that "truth" itself would depend less upon the proposed inherent truth or reality of objects than upon the "Thoughts and Intellections" of the God-like man, himself engaged in "the work which God worketh from the beginning to the end" and, in Traherne's terms, Enjoying Felicity? The practical aspects of Bacon's knowledge, the lower forms on the pyramid, advance towards and are included in the ultimate realisation of the "cone and vertical point". Bacon commends "Metaphysic" but questions whether man should advance further. Traherne, quoting The Divine Pymander, might reply, "If . . . thou wilt not equal thyself to GOD, thou canst not understand GOD . . . [but] . . .

If thou believe in thy self that nothing is impossible, but accountest thyself Immortal, and that thou canst understand all things, every Art, every Science, and the manner and custom of every living thing . . . [then] . . . thou maist understand GOD" (CE 226-27). Bacon thought it wise to avoid such confidence and, by resisting any temptation to advance to "the cone and vertical point" of his pyramid, shunned the further reaches of metaphysics and won for his work a long unassailable reputation for objective scientific thought. Traherne made the further ascent and won for his writing a seemingly inescapable reputation for perverse mysticism. There remains the possibility, however, that, Bacon's objectivity suspected as an illusion and his "non-rational vision" perceived, Traherne's celebration of "man's unlimited capacity to dominate the universe" may be seen to have as basis a knowledge and experience no less deep than that required by Bacon:[20] "to wisdom (which was anciently defined to be the knowledge of things divine and human) there is ever abundance and variety of means".

CHAPTER 7

Select Meditations

The first complete paragraph in the extant manuscript of the Select Meditations focusses a common emphasis of this writing as a whole. The thought of the Centuries of Meditations and Christian Ethicks is adequately prefigured in the celebration of man as "Lord and Heir of the world", a man "redeemed, exalted & in communion" (SM I.82), but there is another theme closely involved with this, manifest immediately in terms of a prayer: "Save this nation . . . Let me O Lord rejoyce in the felicity of thy chosen" (SM I.82). The Felicity of the Select Meditations, more explicitly than that of the later writings, has a public as well as a private significance. As an ideal it represents, as did Plato's ideal, the moral ambition of both individual and state. Both are closely inter-involved and even identical.

The affirmation that God desires peace in his kingdom (SM I.88) does more than connect with the exhortation to follow "the Gentle Ways of Peace and Lov" (C I.4) in the Centuries. By 1669, when the Centuries were to be written, experience of exactly the opposite of "Peace and Lov" was too great to allow anything but a deliberate reaction against a more explicit public concern: national peace and love are by then recognised as difficult, so difficult as to make a public plea irrelevant. The Select Meditations, written most probably before the Dutch Wars and before the aggressive individualism of the Restoration years had become too obviously manifest, could confront the national problem more directly. Peace and love could represent a genuine national hope as well as an

individual one: war and conflict — the self-divisive national conflict of Civil War — were in the past, and might with the restoration of the monarchy become no more than history in a genuine movement towards what Cowley, for example, saw as a peaceful and paradisal national union:

> 'Twas a right Season, and the very Ground
> Ought with a face of Paradise to be found,
> Then when we were to entertain
> Felicity and Innocence again.[1]

The immediacy of the Restoration, as the possible conclusion of a cycle of events that worked against a desire for mutual peace and love, must be remembered, as also should the recognition of the return of a king as a historical and religious apotheosis of universal import. Evelyn focussed this in his diary, a conscious chronicle of an occasion in the destiny of a nation: "it was the Lord's doing, for such a restauration was never mention'd in any history, antient or modern, since the returne of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; nor so joyfull a day and so bright ever seene in this nation, this hapning when to expect or effect it was past all human policy".[2] August predictions were not to be fulfilled, however, and the Centuries reflect a turning away from the pursuit of the "felicity of thy chosen" as a nation to the Felicity of the individual in a corrupt society: the plea that God might "Save this nation" (SM I.82) is recognised as hopeless as "Magistrates and Christian Laws", Publick Courts" and "Solemn Assemblies" (SM I.86) yield little progress towards a true public ideal.

It is the use of Felicity in this conext which assures its credence as a public as well as a private good, the ideal of a

nation as well as an individual. Cowley, in his ode "Upon his Majesty's Restoration and Return", imagines precisely that ground that was to form the basis of Traherne's ambition: the conversion not only of an individual but of a nation (not only as a mere collection of individuals) to the serious entertainment of "Felicity and Innocence", "the very ground" which "Ought" to be and in Traherne's writing actually was recognised as having "a face of paradise". Traherne had lived through the Civil Wars as a child, probably in the once besieged city of Hereford; he had been twelve years old when "King Charles the Martyr" (C I.61) was executed; and he had cast his "Ey of Reason" (C I.25) upon the events of the Interregnum. At the Restoration he, like Cowley, Evelyn and others, foresaw the possibility of the achievement of a national Felicity, for which he earnestly prayed. By 1669 or after he could face only the problem of the individual in a "Barbarous . . . Christian world" (C III.12), and offer only a personal Felicity with a distant hope of more universal fulfilment. By then "it did not so much concern us what Objects were before us, as with what Eys we beheld them" (C III.68).

Felicity has, if only, later, in an individual distillation, a public as well as a private emphasis. It is a notion of ideal and of general "good", of the Good in a Platonic sense. It is compounded of this Platonic ideal and Aristotelian practice. "Aristotle Describeth Felicity when he saith Felicity is the Perfect Exercise of Perfect Virtu in a Perfect Life" (C III.68). "Felicity is rightly defined, to be the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in perfect Life by Perfect Virtue" (CE 19). Seeking an ideal Felicity, complete contentment in fulfilled

happiness, a perfect soul pursues perfect virtue actively, by exercising and bringing it to "fruition" in a perfect life, a life to which there is a social and national as well as an individual aspect.

The concern for the national aspect of this Good continues: "O let thy Glory Abide among us, Thy praises in our Assemblies, let Thy Citties prosper, and villages flourish, our children Grow up in fear of thy Name . . . Soften our Kings Heart, Teach our Senators Wisdom . . . giv our young Men and Maydins knowledg" (SM I.82). The national concern is interwoven with more individual concerns — for personal morality, of "Kings" and "Senators" as of all men, and for "knowledg" among "young Men and Maydins". So too the nation, like the individual, should strive to achieve communion with God (SM I.87) while personal ambition for understanding is bound up with religious and national themes: "O make me comprehensive of all thy Gloryes. and Let me See External Governments and the Beauty of Temples, in a land consecrated by her Laws unto Thee" (SM I.87). Traherne supports the Church of England as re-established by the "Clarendon Code" of the early 1660's less as an ideal Church than as an adequate focus for a much needed unity of religious attitude and practice: he exclaims against "the wickedness of Ignorant zealots! who contemn thy Mercies and Despise the union the Beatiful union of thy National Church!" (SM I.85). It is the "union", unity, wholeness, oneness, peace in communion, that is stressed (as again in SM III.25). Behind this may be the memory of the Civil Wars, of civil disorder and public strife since: if Charles and the re-established Church are not ideal they at least offer the possibility of peace and union, which may in turn offer

the foundation for the ultimate communion, for the achievement of Felicity in all senses. Later, Traherne asserted that he would "not by the Nois of Bloody Wars, and the Dethroning of Kings, advance you to Glory" (C I.4). The Select Meditations contain a more powerful recognition of the destructive nature of recent history as apparent to one concerned with the peaceful achievement of "Glory" which, he says, can be extended to the nation as to the individual:

> Thy Holy Citties are a Wilderness, Zion a wilderness, Jerusalem a Desolation our Holy and our Beautiful house where our fathers praised Thee is burnt up with fire and all our pleasant Things are layd wast . . . O profane not the Throne of thy Glory. let not the Heathen Trample it under foot. Much less let Christians Defile it with their Bloud! (SM I.85).

The plea for peace and unity does not, however, account for Traherne's somewhat apocalyptic view of recent history. Rather than condemning the Civil Wars in religious terms he may be insisting on the danger of sectarianism of any form to a Platonic religious ideal: "His voyce Daylie Sounds in the Temple, His preachers cry a-loud but non regard it. They call us to Repentance for all Abominations . . . they call us again to the Knowledge of God but He hath brought up children and they have Rebelled against Him" (SM I.84). Ultimately, the explanation for Traherne's view of the "Desolation" of his country (SM I.85) must be sought other than in purely political and/or religious terms. The explicit national concerns are generalised into the more abstract philosophical terms typical of Traherne's later writing. These terms have absorbed and may therefore always contain the more historical viewpoint, the public concern: in all three major prose works

Traherne propounds an ethic of all human behaviour. Here, however, "Thick Darkness covereth the Nations, & Gross Darkness the people, which is cheifly contracted by their Inventing and following other Treasures" (SM II.11). Observing the "power of prevayling Customs" (SM II.13), "They will . . . not feel the Nature joy and Glory of [God's] Image in them Selves" (SM I.84). The "Customs and maners of Men" (C III.7), their common behaviour in the false but ever present life of the world, are already recognised as a threat to the true "Heir of the World" and to the pursuit of Felicity.

The idea of man as the image of God is common to the Select Meditations as to all Traherne's writing. Already formulated, too, is the notion that man's naturally pure and innocent inheritance as the image of his creator is lost and obscured by the perverse and consistent pursuit of false ends. Men persistently create false treasures, Traherne insists (SM III.12), and it is this tendency that civil war evinces on a national, even apocalyptic, scale. Alienated from his true inheritance by the pursuit of false treasures man has no conception of the intuitive grasp of the ideal experienced by all children — as a child, Traherne says, all things were glorious because he "had not learned to appropriat any thing other way" (SM III.29) — or the doctrine of Felicity perceived through the "Highest Reason" (C III.2) by means of which Traherne seeks to retrieve and enhance this: "the modestie of Man is an Injurious counterfeit, not modestie, but Ignorance, Ingratitude and Thraldom for such is that that is afrayd to acknowledge the Benefits of God; and unwilling to perveiv the Good" (SM III.67). The apprehensions enjoyed by the

intuition of the child can be sought again, and improved upon, by the "Highest Reason", so that "Ignorance" is a real hindrance to this process, situated as it is within man's "understanding", the area of his activity and experience in which the consciousness of Felicity can, if rightly sought, be most fully achieved. Thus "The Reason why man is a feeble worm is because He despiseth His understanding, and lives only by His fleshly Body. would He live by his understanding He should soone perceiv Himselfe an infinite creature" (SM II.27). The rejection of his "understanding", the overwhelming of it in false desires for false treasures, is representative of man's withdrawal from the world of ideal values in which Felicity ("the Good", SM II.67) and communion can be achieved. Mankind is more worthy of love than heaven and earth, but the actual behaviour of men makes this difficult for they damage and effectively repudiate any doctrine of the pursuit of Felicity by the "Highest Reason" "by withdrawing their love from [God] and me, and by Swerving from His Image" (SM II.9). Thus

> It is impossible at once to be present with Men and Thee my God . . . for they are so far Like Runnagates run from thee . . . The Heavens and the Earth are Annihilated in their understandings, thy laws forgotten, and thy wayes unknown . . . if they will not come to me, O let me not goe back again to them. but weep in my secret places; and pray for them. (SM II.100).

In renouncing the world (as he does again in SM IV.14) Traherne renounces only that false world of men, which is known only in "Ignorance, Ingratitude and Thraldom" (SM II.67) and not in true "understanding" as this shows man to be "an infinite creature" (SM II.27) and the image of God. In turning to the values sought

and known by understanding Traherne realises his own inadequacy, for he too is subject to the pursuit of false treasures engaged in by men. He prays that this may be made good: "I have deserved to be vile in mine own eyes, And I abhor my selfe in Dust and Ashes . . . O manifest thy Selfe, and Dwell within me!" (SM II.34).

Traherne's affirmation in the Select Meditations of the purity of the childhood vision of the world as described also in the Centuries has been quoted here (SM III.29 etc.; see C III.1 ff.). Traherne says that he himself experienced the obscuring of this childhood vision. Life in the world and education are here held to be responsible for this. In SM III.30 he says that his education brought false apprehensions and that, being brought up in the city, he only learned "truth" in the country. In his "close Retirements" he was "some years as if no Body", but on returning, when he "came among men", he "found them to be superadded Treasures" (SM III.69). His attitude to his education at Oxford is ambivalent, as in the Centuries where he says he learned "Glorious Secrets" (C III.36) but found no-one "that did professly Teach Felicity" (C III.37). In the Select Meditations he complains that he came "from the scholes, haveing there heard them dispute De ente De forma materiali, D[e] Quid-ditate, and such like Drie and Empty Theames" (SM III.30). He later affirms, however, that "I have been nourished at universities in Beautiful Streets & famous colledges . . . [and] . . . am sent thither from God Almighty the maker of Heaven and Earth, to teach Immortal Souls the way to Heaven" (SM III.83). The fact that Traherne was at Oxford during a notable controversy between scholastic dogma and the "new philosophy" might account, in part at least, for this ambivalence. His intention to teach,

fundamental in all his prose writing, is here most clearly seen as part of a conscious autobiography.

Certain forms of education, then, and experience of the world of men, as opposed to that of God, tends to bring about the obscuring and loss of the child's special vision. If this can be recaptured and enhanced by the "Highest Reason", though, the world of nature can be appreciated anew. Without this effort of the "Highest Reason", there is only "Spiritual Idleness", "an Alienation of the mind from its proper objects" (SM II.78). This is part of man's dual nature, the narrow and confined aspect of which is seen in his alienated life in the false world he himself makes: "There is in man a Double selfe, according as He is in God, or the world. In the world he is confined, and walketh up and Down in Little Rooms: but in God He is evry where" (SM II.92). Men need to realise their Capacity in the real world, that of God and nature, "In his Similitude" (SM III.58). Then they will see themselves as "Heirs of the world" (SM III.58), of the real world, the world truly apprehended and known as pure, unalienated treasure.

"In the world", then, man "is confined, and walketh up and Down in Little Rooms" (SM II.92); but in reality his soul is "An extensiv and Immaterial Being which is Like an Indivisible Atom without Bulk, All eye and sight" and "is therefore every where, because its sight is so, which it selfe is" (SM II.92). Traherne asserts here the need to transcend physical limitations and to exist in "spirit" through all eternity and infinity with and for God. Later he discusses the practice of "meditating" as part of "The Activity of my Soul" (SM III.72): "we speak not here of outward power, but Inward" (SM III.77). Although "all the Reality

of Happiness and woe consists in the Inward and Spiritual Estate, of the Soul with God" (SM I.88) the poem inserted in SM I.90 asks "Can He be Quiet that Doth all Enjoy?". The "Inward and Spiritual Estate" and the knowledge and comprehension belonging to it moves constantly towards the exercise of "outward power" (SM I.88; III.77) which has its issue in the most vigorous passages of Traherne's writing, celebrating, for example, "man's Dominion over the world" (SM III.10). That this "Dominion" is conceived finally in a "Spiritual" sense retains the connection with the "Inward" power but does not hinder the energetic intellectual pursuit of knowledge and experience which overflows continually throughout the writing. "Man is made to appear in Glory, as well as to inherit all Treasure. And therefore is Endued with Liberty of Will as Well as comprehension. He is Glorious in Abilitie in respect of Life power and Intelligence" (SM II.32). God provides for "man's Dominion over the world" (SM III.10) by making him "Lord and Heir of the world" (SM I.82), "The Sole possessor of all his Treasures" (SM IV.43). The physical world and its "Treasures" can be allied with the "Spiritual Estate" and its "Treasures" as part of the "Glory" of man's "Liberty of will as Well as comprehension" (SM II.32): man "is the Inclusive Head of all Spirituall and Material perfection" (SM III.9) and he is vital to God and His creation. God created "infinit varieties and kinds of things" "for his Image to Enjoy" (SM III.9) and it is for man to Enjoy them in the fullest sense, to know and appreciate them: "he that is a Thanksgiver and Lord over them is meet for God and can return unto Him" (SM III.9). "Had there been noe creatures made that could need the sun, the sun could never have been made a Treasure" (SM III.9). Only man makes physical objects into

"Treasures" and gives them real significance; only through his mind and activity as he seeks to Enjoy the objects of creation do these objects achieve God's full intention in creating them. "Angels can Adore Giv Thanks and lov yet without the Interposure and mediation of man cannot enjoy this Adspectable world" (SM III.9). The "Adspectable world" is that available as a physical entity to man, the only link in creation between material and spiritual things, for him to reflect upon and Enjoy, returning it to God, from whom it originates, in his "Thanksgivings". As "the Inclusive Head of all Spiritual and Material Perfection" (SM III.9) man's commitments to "Inward" and "outward" power are co-extensive, although, finally, the "Inward and Spiritual Estate" may be said to determine the activity of the "outward power".

In this combined exercise man Enjoys his "Dominion over the world" (SM III.10) and it is through this that he can realise his dual Felicity as both heir of the world and image of God. That God made man "Lord and Heir of the world" is clearly asserted, but, ultimately, man approaches God and his own God-likeness itself through his "Dominion". It is as the image of God that man can see that he is able to become "comprehensiv of all [God's] Gloryes" (SM I.87). Man "is Himselfe a God to God" (SM II.26) and "Being restored to glory . . . may again live in the Similitude of God" (SM II.7).

The theology of these ideas is worked out by Traherne. God, he says, can do nothing greater than to make his own image. In creating man he has done just this (SM III.91). God and man are linked, mutually involved, by their mutual love (SM IV.7), and God exists for man as an ideal whose perfection he strives,

Platonically, to achieve: "O that we could live the life of God" (SM IV.36). But this perfection is not as distant as conventional theologies might require, for, in asserting that men are the "Sons" and "Heirs" of God (SM IV.4), made in all respects in the "Divine Image" (SM IV.4), Traherne does not hesitate to assert that they have, potentially and literally, all the attributes of God (SM IV.6). "He Deifieth us in making us the End of all his Doing", he says (SM IV.7): God "Intended that thou shouldst Live Like a God" (SM III.15) so, Traherne urges, "be as God Himselfe who enjoyeth by Seeing and by Loveing" (SM III.43). This applies only to the man seeing and understanding, Enjoying, the world "aright", the man capable of adjusting his apprehensions in accordance with the Platonic image of God and of living the life that the pursuit of this ideal requires him to live. The promise of the state of God-likeness is held out as a motive for the reformation of life and apprehensions necessary to the Platonically conceived ascent to deification. It is in this way that Felicity becomes a term not only for the fulfilment of Platonic aspiration but a notion affecting moral life and every aspect of human activity and the way in which this is viewed. The "Estate" granted to man by God necessarily requires for its true realisation, a thorough moral effort on the part of man. Such is God's love, however, that this effort is itself, ideally, the Enjoyment of Felicity. This is no light undertaking, in Traherne's view, for it is conceived as a means of organising the whole of man's life; but it does indicate the extent of God's generosity to man, who has no excuse for failure or unhappiness. His happiness and his ultimate "complacency" (SM II.51)

in God and as God, the achieved Enjoyment of Felicity, is his own responsibility.

Initially, therefore, the pursuit of Felicity is motivated by the love of man for God, itself a return of God's love for man. Man's mind must be prepared, adjusted "aright", for the true Enjoyment of the world that will lead to this achievement of Felicity. So Traherne prays that God will "Give [him] those Sences, Thoughts and Apprehensions" (SM III.100) that he most needs: "fill me with a Divine and Holy Sence, That I may be made possessor of thy Heavenly Treasures, Give me Continuall and Repeated Meditations, Livly Praises and Powerfull Thanksgivings every day" (SM III.100). The subject desires to become the "possessor of [God's] Heavenly Treasures": even here the heir of the world demands the appropriation of the whole of creation. His "Meditations" on and "Thanksgivings" for this are an enhancement of God's glory, for it is God who gives the objects of creation and, more importantly, a creature so wonderful as man to Enjoy them:

> O what incredible Things hast thou don for Men! Made every Soul almost a God, Like God unto Thee. For thou art in us as we in Thee. every Soul is an Infinit Centre A Temple of Heaven and Earth . . . Each one . . . more Beloved then if Himselfe Were made a Dietie. (SM I.83).

The argument for man as a proof God's greatness is developed and the greatness of man celebrated to such an extent that it becomes difficult to overlay this with more conventional ideas of the omnipotent Godhead. "A creature" such as man "that can enjoy Infinite Blessedness has unlimited comprehension for all Eternity: and very clear and distinctive powers to penetrate the Bowels of

every centre" (SM II.26): "in every poynt", "He findeth a Diety" but "is Himselfe a God to God" (SM II.26). God "made the Soul Empty, as if there were noe Infinity within us, no . . . world, no God, no Being" but if he will "meditate upon it" man's soul will "have a Power to Creat these Things and Seat them in itSelfe. as God did by Thinking creat all in Himselfe" (SM IV.13).

Man has not only "unlimited comprehensions" (SM II.26) but "a Power to Creat . . . Things" (SM IV.13) by the activity of his mind. Traherne is very nearly an idealist. "Thoughts constitut the cream of all Things, the very flower prime, and Top of Beings . . . without them all the world would be a Dead and Desert wilderness" (SM IV.13). "The World" and the objects in it do have real physical existence, however: "The world is a thing of infinit value as it Proceeds from [God]" (SM IV.13). The importance of "Thoughts" is that through them the world is realised and apprehended as the creation of God. "The world is a thing of infinit value as it Proceeds from Him. but in returning to Him can be of none but by our Thoughts" (SM IV.12). God created the world which, although it has a definite physical existence, is "Dead" or "Empty". Man learns to appreciate the world, to Enjoy it through knowledge and experience of it, and thus, in his thoughts, return it to God through praise and thanksgiving. The world must be "received by our Thoughts and Exprest within" for it is not "at all Profitable, till it is so understood, as to be enjoy'd, and to be come the Ground of infinit Thanksgivings" (SM IV.12). It is thus that, in respect of the objects of creation, God "hath given them to us by giving us a power, to produce Things into Being" (SM IV.14) and thus, quite simply, that "material"

things, being known and Enjoyed aright, have "spiritual" meanings and are returned to God enhanced by the understanding and realisation, the "making real" or "making meaningful", of man's Enjoyment.

Man, a physical and spiritual being, is released upon the physical universe and, with his "unlimited comprehensions", given liberty to exercise his Capacity to the full:

> I can comprehend in my understanding the Magnitude of a Room, the wideness of the Hemisphere, and Spaces Extant a bove the Stars . . . my Soul exceedeth all Limitations. It is so Like God Almighty, that it comprehendeth the Heavens . . . I can plainly see infinit Space, and am a creature Able to Enjoy Infinity.
> (SM IV.3).

Finally, however, the idea of God within the otherwise apparently anthropocentric universe cannot be escaped: "in evry point of Space God wholy is, and wholy is there by me to be Enjoyed" (SM IV.3). Even God, though, is "by me to be Enjoyed", so complementary is the mutual relationship between God and man. This, like the insistence on eternity and infinity, hints at Traherne's conception of the "Oneness" of all existence, in which it remains significant that, while man is realised in his writing as a physical as well as a spiritual being avidly Enjoying the "Adspectable world", God remains merely an idea.

The mutual relationship of "God" and "Man" involves, on man's part certainly, more than a sense of "spiritual communion". The Felicity that must be achieved by the man seeking "complacency" in God-likeness has been shown to be a doctrine of the Good in a Platonic sense, but one also closely involved with an Aristotelian sense of "perfect Life". Man's relationship with

his God can be charted through a realisation of "perfect Life" that shows the nature of the endowments that he, as heir of the world and image of God, has received from his creator. "The best of all possible lives is that wherein the best of all possible things are after the Similitude of God enjoyed" (SM II.2). "The best of all possible things" are "God, His essence, Attributes, works, counseils, Laws . . . And whatsoever else is included in these" (SM II.3), so, in "perfect Life", it is to Enjoyment of these that man must apply himself. The "Similitude of God" is "the best of all possible manners" in which Enjoyment can be undertaken. Among "whatsoever else" should be included — as well as God's "essence, Attributes, works, counseils, laws" — the physical world as God's creation. So man's activity in the pursuit of true Enjoyment becomes practical as well as contemplative: "the world is an Hous wherein I am placed in communion with God so to enjoy" all of his works (SM II.3). This is the outline of a major area for the pursuit of Felicity, for "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's kingdom" (SM III.53).

A list of objects of Enjoyment is offered in SM II.82. These include villages and cities, "assemblies", and the sky. Here, specifically, the doctrines later pronounced in Christian Ethicks and the Centuries carry a sense of real human community and a genuine public emphasis: these definitely form part of a real and practical "perfect Life". Here also man should strive to "enjoy all things", all the infinite "Treasures of God", "And God wholy in every thing to be enjoyed" (SM II.29). The whole world, the whole universe, is "a Temple Worthy of God", and in examining the furnishings of this "Temple" man, or at least "an Excellent Man",

"feasteth always on the Sight of the Dietie" (SM III.13). It is through the objects of God's creation that man can most readily understand and approach his idea of God, for they all bear witness to the ideal nature. It is a common emphasis, found also for example in Bacon, that there could be said to be a gospel of God's work as well as of his word. Traherne follows this doctrine in his reiteration of the whole created universe as a "Temple" of God. "Wise and Holy must man be to all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth" (SM I.92), for the creatures, all created things, carry in them some aspect of God which is holy in itself but, more importantly, can be used by man as part of his effort to understand God. Man must make positive and active use of all these things. This is done by means of his "Power to Creat . . . Things", not from nothing but in their "true" aspects. In studying God's creatures in his "Temple", the world, man must use this power and remember that "The world is a thing of infinit value as it Proceeds from [God]. but in returning to Him can be of none but by our Thoughts" (SM IV.12). Man's thoughts become of almost equal importance with the original fiat that ordered the creation of the world:

> as God by a perpetual Influx of Beuty and power upholdeth the world: in which respect every moments consirvation is fittly stil'd a new creation: so will he have us by a perpetual Influx and Activity of thought to maintain all Things and in our selves to uphold our Treasures.
> (SM III.5).

Man is therefore important to God, and creation is only sustained by the mutual activity of both, man enhancing its objects before he "returns" them to God. "The world is in Him upheld by him, the

world in us is upheld by us" (SM III.5). This thought overlays the Enjoyment of the physical world in a physical sense. "All Things are Treasures" (SM III.3) and "God is enjoyed" "in evry thing" (SM III.8), but over and around the material Enjoyment of things there is an immaterial but equally active Enjoyment of things that involves mental appreciation, realisation, in order that man may offer things to God enhanced by his own reflection on and of them. This in turn leads to a "spiritual" aspect, as "reflections" become "meditations" which "Transport [the] soul and make it even to Dwell in Heaven" (SM II.82). These "meditations" require that a man should "Awaken . . . [his] Thoughts, and strongly apply them to see the Glory of Gods Kingdom, the pleasing Excellencyes of his works and ways" (SM II.82). It is to "Gods Kingdom" that man must direct his "Thoughts", acknowledging and appreciating the "pleasing Excellencyes of his works and ways". By his mental elaboration and enhancement, his complete Enjoyment, of the objects of creation, man achieves the "meditations" which "Transport [his] soul and make it even to Dwell in Heaven". These "meditations" refer specifically to his "Thoughts" and the objects to which they are directed: the mental "transport" comes from the avid elaboration of those "Thoughts" exercised almost violently upon the objects of God's creation. He must "Awaken" those "Thoughts": "meditation" is an awakening to full awareness of the ever-present physical world, not a withdrawal from it. The world can be transcended in the act of knowing it, knowing it thoroughly. It is thus that man, the spiritual and physical link between God and his creation, Enjoys the physical world as a means to his complete

Felicity, finding in physical objects a spiritual clue to and confirmation of his own spiritual potential.

It is thus that, his body remaining in the world, man's thoughts may be said to leave it. This is achieved by a "true" understanding of the things of the world, and a sense that "Heaven and earth is full of the Majesty of [God's] Glory" (SM III.4) and not by purely spiritual or abstract meditation. Traherne's contemplation begins in the physical world and includes or involves a physical sense and starting point for the elaborate Enjoyment that develops from this. The physical world and man in his Capacity contain in embryo the full potential of all "spiritual" realisations: the spiritual life represents the dynamic and kaleidoscopic interaction and connection of Capacity and potential released in man's contact with the objects of God's creation, an elaboration of the "physical" means for "spiritual" ends.

Man must also retain a full realisation of his own Capacity and its powers and implications. He must know of "The marvellous use and Excellency of his comprehension" (SM III.59) and "enjoy Himselfe" (SM III.24), realising and appreciating his Capacity so as to "Infinitly Delight in Himself" (SM III.25). He must know that "it is impossible that a Creature more Glorious then Himselfe could be made" (SM II.24) for his achievement of Felicity cannot become real until this is appreciated. There is a state of "complacency" (SM II.24), a satisfaction in the knowledge of his own powers, that man must achieve before he embarks on the Enjoyment of the world. In Felicity itself he will ultimately achieve a higher "complacency", a complete satisfaction, in communion and God-likeness.

This constant recurrence of consideration of man's own Capacity and powers is one index of the weight that Traherne attaches to these. In terms of his writing any probing of his attitude to the physical world as God's "Temple" returns to man, the inheritor of the creation and image of its maker. For it is in man's mind that things have real meaning or value: the power that God gives man "to produce Things into Being" is reflected in man's experience of Enjoyment in his pursuit of Felicity in that it determines the perception of objects as the creations of God and thus releases the Capacity of man into the activity of Enjoyment. This is only one possibility. Man's Capacity can be misused and misapplied, as in the obscuring of the child's natural intuition in experience of the false world. In the true exercise of human power, in the pursuit of Enjoyment as the means to Felicity, man enters a new and valuable world. "By studying felicity we are brought to the Delineation of God's kingdom . . . I was brought it seems to the House of wisdom where all Things appear with a new face" (SM III.53). How "Things appear" is determined by the way in which man exerts his "power to produce Things into Being". This power is not that of idealism, but rather a means of active perception by which all things are placed in a particular perceptive context: it is a certain way of seeing or thinking about actual things rather than any more fundamental creative act. For Traherne things exist materially (as "Dead things") without human perception or reflection, but their real, true existence (as living images of God) is only realised or produced by man by means of this power. Correspondingly, there may be a dull, "Dead", human means of perception that sees but does not enhance physical objects.

"Bare knowledge gives no man a Title to Heavenly Joys: It is the Light onely in which they are Enjoyed" (SM IV.22). Here "the Light", the true, partially creative perceptive act, must be distinguished from "Bare knowledge" although this can be valuable within its limitations. The "Light" as the "true" aspect of perception is inevitably associated with God. "Bare knowledge" is the mechanical exercise of material minds.

Traherne uses several models for his notion of perception. Among the most clearly explained and explainable is one derived from Plato. This is explored in terms of Plato's list of the necessities to vision: "An Ey rightly Disposed, an object seated at a convenient Distance . . . [and] . . . Light" (SM III.16). What applies to vision is applied also, by Traherne, to understanding, the result of perception: perception is always, for Traherne, much more than the mere "seeing" of objects. "A faculty of Knowledg . . . an Intelligible object . . . [and] an Intelligible light" (SM III.16) are therefore necessary to "perfect understanding" (SM III.16). Clearly the "object" and the "faculty" are given, in creation and in man; God, comparable to light in all senses, is the "light" ("without the knowledge of god we can see nothing", SM III.16) whereby "perfect understanding" can be achieved:

> Nothing can truly be Apprehended but it must be Apprehended as Treasure and Interest. Because every thing to God and his Image is soe . . . all the things in Heaven and Earth are Infinit Treasures: And are never Enjoyed but when truly seen: nor ever indeed truly seen, but by a wise man they are truly enjoyd.
> (SM III.6).

God, and man his image, have pure and true apprehensions, seeing

things as "Treasures" by perceiving a form of Platonic value in them. The Enjoyment of this value is essential to man's Felicity and to his Platonic ascent to God-likeness. The "Intelligible light", however, the key to perfect understanding, may not be the means by which man's perceptive power is exercised. If it is not, things will not be seen as "Treasures": "To some the world is a kingdom, to Others a Dungeon a wilderness a prison. Because some have pure and bright Apprehensions, others rude vulgar and Deformed" (SM III.6). The "rude" apprehensions are comparable to the "Ignorance" which makes man "unwilling to perceiv the Good" (SM II.67). The world and its objects are neither inherently good nor inherently bad: they are simply "Dead things" with a potential for the Good. As material but spiritually dead things they await the coming of man, the link between spiritual and material things, to "contemplate" them and return them to God by thanksgiving as objects enhanced by his own Capacity and realised in their own capacity for the Good. The relationship of all things is, ideally, one of mutual benefit, for it is in this system of spiritual enhancement of material things that man achieves his Felicity and God-likeness and that God himself benefits in the praises offered to him. The spiritual enhancement of things is man's Enjoyment, and he should never cease to express his wonder "That God should give us soe Divine a power! To Transfigure all Things, and be Delighted!" (SM II.71). The "Things" that he must "Transfigure" are not in themselves to be despised but known for their own "Treasure" and usefulness in the utilitarian emphasis that underlies the spiritual transcendence: man must learn about "the fabrick of the world" and the "uses of . . . creatures" (SM II.88),

for "The Terrestrial Services of Heaven and Earth [are] Exceeding Great, as they serve our Bodies" (SM II.87). These indeed are the material bases of the spiritual transcendence, which does not displace or deny them but surpasses them in the special process of knowing that leads to Felicity: all things and all aspects of all things can be held within this. The material and spiritual man, with his infinite Capacity, is presented with an infinite variety of objects to Enjoy. Enjoyed rightly they will lead him to Felicity and God-likeness. His problem is the avoidance of "false Apprehensions". He must "know all Things" and "prize" them (SM IV.56) in the most complete sense:

> Wisdom is the Light in which Happiness is Enjoyed . . . It is the very Possession of felicity . . . Happy are they that are not troubled with the false Apprehension of Things . . . to know all Things and not to prize them is the Greatest folly in the whole world, to . . . enjoy them all is the Highest wisdom. wisdom includes knowledg, and the Improvement of it.
> (SM IV.56).

Felicity contains "Happiness" in many senses, but also, particularly and vitally, "Wisdom", "knowledg, and the Improvement of it". The means to this realisation of "Wisdom", "Happiness" and improved knowledge is the "prizing" and Enjoyment of "All Things" in the "Adspectable world". "The Articles of our faith are the objects of Enjoyment proposed to Speculation" (SM III.58).

The Enjoyment of the "Adspectable world" in the context of man's pursuit of Felicity is also associated with the love of God and man and their whole mutual relationship. There is a "Hypostatical union" between God and man (SM II.92), connected with the idea of man as an image of God and as the material and

spiritual link between God and his creation. It is in the idea of "Lov" that all things, including man and God, cohere and approach an ideal "Oneness". The "Lov" of the "Hypostatical union" involves man not only as image of God and the only truly material and spiritual being but also causes God to make man heir of the world. The physical world, the work of God, is the clue to God's "Lov", for "we are all now to live in friendship with God, Admiring at the Riches which He hath Given: but most at the Lov, whose Greatness . . . [is] . . . seen in the Vastness of His works" (SM II.88). Creation, then, remains of central importance to man's conception of God, formed through speculation and meditation on the things of the physical world. The utilitarian aspect of "Heaven and Earth" is significant, but is "nothing in comparison of the service they do us in Exhibiting [God's] Lov" (SM II.87). Man is in a position of almost impossible endowment: the creation exhibits God's love and it is through this love that the creation itself is Enjoyed. "How much . . . doth it concerne us to know the Nature of that without which nothing is Enjoyed" (SM II.84). Typically, a limitation (the creation is only Enjoyed by means a specific concept of "Lov") becomes a benefit (the creation itself is "Lov" and demonstrates the means by which it is Enjoyed). Further, "Lov is the means by which God is enjoyed" (SM II.87): the "Lov" exhibited in creation and by God towards man is the means by which man can Enjoy God. This inter-involvement hints at an ultimate sense of the "Oneness" of all things. "Naked Lov is the cause of all things, and naked Lov is the End of all Things" (SM II.84).

"Oneness" is the end of all things and the beginning of all things. "Lov" is its medium and the evidence for its ideal

existence. "Oneness" is comparable to the ideal primal unity sought in all Plato's dialogues. For Traherne, man can Enjoy not only the objects of creation but also God himself. This implies that he can understand God and know Him completely, and that in this knowledge he himself becomes as God, or becomes God himself. This is the aim of the striving for the ideal as embodied in the idea of God: "communion with God is the End of the creation" (SM II.87 —it is also the beginning of creation). "Oneness" represents for man the attainment of this end, the final ability to "rest with complacency in God" (SM II.51), when man and God and the whole creation will be inseparable and indistinguishable. It is an undefined, and perhaps undefinable, absolute. It can be recognised and known only in the writing as it presses towards and upon the (comm)union of "Oneness": "All! all all the souls in Heaven and earth shall Dwell in [Man]. and He in them, and they in God, and God in Him and He in God forevermore" (SM II.27).

CHAPTER 8

Centuries of Meditations

"An Empty Book is like an Infants Soul, in which any Thing may be Written. It is Capable of all Things, but containeth Nothing" (C I.1). Both empty book and infant's soul, in their given emptiness, are yet capable of all things. They are images of the infinite Capacity of the human mind or soul. In the experience of a growing child there is an analogy for the development of the writing undertaken by Traherne and, similarly, for the exercise of all human Capacity. Any particular experience or inscription is only one possible realisation of infinite potential. One of the parables of the Centuries ("I will open my Mouth in Parables", C I.3) will trace the growth of awareness from the intuition of the "Infant Ey" (M II.86-87) to the rational perception of the "Ey of Reason" (C I.25). The Centuries represent one particular experience and inscription, one realisation of infinite Capacity. The writing articulates aspects of the progress from emptiness to fulfilment in one man and urges fulfilment upon the reader: "I will teach . . . by Experience" (C III.1). To read the Centuries is to witness the filling of the book (literally, as it is written) and the fulfilling of the individual soul, which grew from infancy to reason and grows again in the writing/reading of the book. The result is only one possible realisation of the potential of the book and of the man, for both potentials are infinite. The reader is confronted, in effect, with an empty book (it is empty for him, until he begins to read) and the empty soul of the writer: both are capable of all things and will be (ful)filled only in reading, as

once they were (ful)filled in writing. The reader encounters in the text at once a trace of the writer's own fulfilment, the realisation of his "Soul", and an exhortation to realise his own, the reader's, "Soul" in the same or similar manner. The writer and his empty book are capabilities mutually exercised and (ful)filled. The reader is invited to share in this and to fulfil his own infinite Capacity: the realisation of the empty book, of the infant soul in the writing, suggests and seeks to provide means to the realisation of all the "infinit Space in our Understandings" (C II.82).

The opening words of the Centuries propose the filling and fulfilling of both book and soul. The aim is to teach: there is "some Great Thing" which must be communicated (C I.2), there are "Truths", "Profitable Wonders", "Enriching Truths" (C I.1) that can lead to this dual fulfilment. The educative process is the book's purpose, the writing's motive. Traherne sees his writing as being composed of "Parables" from which the reader is urged to learn (C I.3). He will "unfold" these "in . . . a Plain maner" (C I.3) and "teach . . . by Experience" (C III.1). The Centuries may have been written for Susanna Hopton, but this does not undermine the fundamental purpose: every reader approaches the book "Empty . . . [but] . . . Capable of all Things" and will similarly witness the plain unfolding of Traherne's parables, his "Enriching Truths": he will learn "by Experience".

The methods of communication reveal something of the nature of the "Truths" to be communicated. The writer chooses the "Ways of Peace and Lov", the "Ways of Eas and Repos", to explicate notions of "Contentment and Thanksgiving": "all Envy, Rapine, Bloodshed,

Complaint, and Malice shall be far removed" (C I.4). This is a deliberate turning aside from what is recognised as "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20), an "Estate" the problems of which will be explicitly dealt with when "Practical Happiness" (C IV.1) is considered in the fourth of the Centuries. Here recent events are specifically referred to: "the Nois of Bloody Wars, and the Dethroning of Kings" (C I.4), the Civil Wars and the death of "King Charles the Martyr" (C I.61). The immediate concern is not yet with "Practical Happiness" in "the true Estate of this World" but with more abstract "Enriching Truths" as these touch upon attitudes to rather than experience within this world. From this the "Nois of Bloody Wars, and the ~~Dethroning~~ Dethroning of Kings" can be temporarily excluded.

The "Great Thing" that the Centuries aim to communicate is that every individual is an "Heir of the World" (C I.3). The writing seeks to convince the reader that he is a "possessor of the Whole World" (C I.3), a world made by God for him and for all men and women equally. Through a true and thorough realisation of this, man can achieve "A Communion with [God] in all His Glory" (C I.5). This "Communion" is offered as one aspect of the process of fulfilment that the Centuries seek to inspire, but its relation to more strictly theological notions of "Communion" is distant. The "Contemplation of [God's] Lov in the Work of Redemption" is indeed "Wonderful" (C I.5) but, ultimately, secondary. This is contemplation of the means of redemption. What is to be stressed here is "the End for which we are Redeemed" (C I.5). Later, the reader is assured that "the End is better then the Means" (C II.90), and the crucifixion will be considered as an

example of God's love to man (C I.56 ff.) rather than as the culminating act of "His Divine Wisdom" in His salvation of man (C I.5): as means rather than end. It is precisely "His Divine Wisdom", in fact, which must be "made ours" (C I.5) in the progress towards true "Communion"; and man may finally overgo even God's own "Wisdom" by his insistent subservience of means to ends. Such insistence in the face of the sacrifice offered by orthodoxy as the ultimate end of God's "Wisdom" might imply an atheistic arrogance. An uncertainty as to the absolute integrity of a God entirely independent of man's concept of an ideal Godhead is secretly present throughout Traherne's writing. More importantly, however, God's "Wisdom" cannot be passively received by man: it is "our Fruition of it" (C I.5) which matters. The use of apparent ends as merely means to man's own "Communion" and fulfilment must be justified by a thorough and active realisation of their full significance. If "nothing but Felicity is worthy of our Labor, because all other things are the Means only which induced unto it" (C III.56), the importance of a rigorous and extensive "Labor", the active "Fruition" of man's potential, to the achievement of an ultimate Felicity should be stressed. The passive gospel of redemption will be transcended by the active gospel of Felicity, striven for and won by the radical exercise of man's Capacity.

This "Labor" is represented by the process of Enjoyment (C I.25), the "Fruition" of God's "Divine Wisdom being made ours". The process is more rigorous and serious than its name might suggest. Enjoyment has its own morality — by means of true Enjoyment man will become "Holy . . . Divine . . . Righteous . . . [and] . . . Just" (C I.12) — and involves both "thinking Well"

(C I.8) and a full appreciation and understanding of the "Whole World" (C I.6). The world is "made to be Enjoyed" (C I.10) and "in Enjoying the World . . . you accomplish the End of your Creation" (C I.11). "All Things were made to be yours. And you were made to Prize them according to their value: which is your Office and Duty, the End for which you were Created, and the Means whereby you Enjoy" (C I.12). The conjunction of "thinking Well" and a thorough understanding of the "Whole World" is fundamental in Traherne's writing. The "Whole World" is in fact a misnomer, as the notion of "thinking Well" should imply: before the process of Enjoyment can begin much of the "Whole World" has been deliberately excluded from the project. Essentially, "there are two worlds" of which "One was made by God, the other by men" (C I.7). The "Whole World" of Enjoyment is that of God. That of men has been excised, like "the Nois of Bloody Wars". That excision does not imply a lack of awareness of the world of men: later, this will seem only too keenly present. It is "a Babel of Confusions: Invented Riches, Pomps and Vanities, brought in by Sin" (C I.7). If the world made by God is "Great and Beautifull. Before the Fall, it was Adams Joy, and the Temple of his Glory" (C I.7) this paradise has only been regained after an individual fall by an arduous task issuing from immediate experience. "To Contemn the World, and to Enjoy the World" (C I.7) may appear to be the ambivalent privilege of an over-articulate mystic, but this real duality has a meaning defined in the written trace of actual experience.

The idea of the Centuries as "Parables" is important. There is a limited value in regarding the Centuries as no more than

unmediated autobiographical reflection. Their true impulse is elsewhere. The account of aspects of Traherne's particular experience of childhood in the early part of the third of the Centuries need not be read too literally. In fact this account may find a definite purpose within a larger scheme. "Abov all things", Traherne "desired to see those Principles which a Stranger in this World would covet to behold upon his first appearance" (C IV.54). The urge to "teach . . . by Experience" is fundamental. With the desire to see the world as a "Stranger" might "upon his first appearance" the significance of the tabula rasa proposed in the opening words is reaffirmed. "An Empty Book . . . an Infants Soul", a "Stranger . . . upon his first appearance" are similarly "capable of all Things". It is through the example of experience within this infinite potential that the "Parables" of "Enriching Truths", of benefit to all, are offered, and the infinite potential itself affirmed and celebrated. Those things "which a Stranger in this World would covet to behold" are the works of God's world, the world experienced and spontaneously Enjoyed by the "Infant Ey" and vital to the Enjoyment still possible by the "Ey of Reason". This Enjoyment cannot be understood, however, unless, by parables of experience, the reasons for and nature of the rejection of man's world are recognised.

Felicity will be achieved by Enjoyment of the world that "Before the Fall . . . was Adams Joy". This world is still available to man as a paradisal resource for his fulfilment. It is the world as seen by the "Infant Ey", the "Stranger . . . upon his first appearance": "Certainly Adam in Paradice had not more

sweet and Curious Apprehensions of the World, then I when I was a child" (C III.1). Just as "thinking Well" must accompany a full appreciation of the world in Enjoyment, so the world as perceived by the "Infant Ey" requires "Curious ~~Apprenhensions~~ Apprehensions". "Those Pure and Virgin Apprehensions I had from the Womb and that Divine Light wherewith I was born, are the Best unto this Day, wherin I can see the Universe" (C III.1). These "Apprehensions" are recommended as the means to a thorough Enjoyment of the world. "All appeared New, and Strange at the first, inexpressibly rare, and Delightfull, and Beautiful . . . My Knowledg was Divine . . . I seemed as one Brought into the Estate of Innocence . . . I was Entertained like an Angel with the Works of GOD in their Splendor and Glory" (C III.2). The "Infant Ey" was, intuitively, "Heir of the World" and so, as the Centuries aim to show the reader himself as "Heir of the World", something can be learned from the intuition of the "Infant Ey". "He must be Born again and becom a little Child that will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven . . . all our Thoughts must be Infant-like and Clear" (C III.5). This, however, is a simplification of both the experience that produced the recognition and of its significance as a parable. A continuation of the quotation makes this clear: "all our Thoughts must be Infant-like and Clear: the Powers of our Soul free from the leven of this World, and disentangled from mens conceits and customs . . . we should be as very strangers to the Thoughts Customs and Opinions of men in this world" (C III.5). The intuition of the "Infant Ey", however, was admirable, but is now inadequate. "I knew by Intuition those things which since my Apostasie, I Collected again by the Highest Reason" (C III.2). It is "the

Highest Reason" that is to be the basis of the "Apprehensions", the "thinking Well", essential to Enjoyment. This was developed only after a personal "Apostasie". It was this "Apostasie" that produced the reaction against the world of men and their "Riches of Invention" (C III.9) and the decision to explore the world of God by Enjoyment of the "Riches of Nature" (C III.9).

In his own "Apostasie" Traherne "was corrupted; and made to learn the Dirty Devices of this World" (C III.3). "My Thoughts . . . were blotted out"; "The first Light . . . was totally ecclypsed" (C III.7). The intuitive perception of the "Infant Ey" was destroyed as the riches of invention replaced those of nature:

> If you ask me how it was ecclypsed? Truly by the Customs and maners of Men, which like Contrary Winds blew it out: by an innumerable company of other Objects, rude vulgar and Worthless Things that like so many loads of Earth and Dung did over whelm and Bury it: by the Impetuous Torrent of Wrong Desires in all others whom I saw or knew that carried me away and alienated me from it.
> (C III.7).

"Gold Silver Houses Clothes &c", the riches of invention, provide no basis for true Enjoyment but are heaped upon the growing child, burying his intuitive perception: "Barbarous Inventions spoyle your knowledg. They put Grubs and Worms in Mens Heads: that are Enemies to all Pure and True Apprehensions, and eat out all their Happiness" (C III.13). Before the process of real Enjoyment can begin the principles of "the Highest Reason" must be adopted and the effects of "Apostasie" resisted and overthrown. There is an urgent need to "Conquer the Customs and Opinions of Men" (C IV.38).

Only then, when "our Thoughts must be Infant-like and Clear", can the lessons of the former intuitive insight that produced spontaneous Enjoyment be applied on the level of the highest reason. Unless this process of rethinking is attempted Felicity is impossible and Enjoyment meaningless, as it always is if concerned only with the false riches of invention. The "outward Bondage of Opinion and Custom" (C III.8) must be thrown off, the riches of invention replaced by the riches of nature, or the "absurdly Barbarous . . . Christian World" (C III.12) environs the potential heir of the world in a parody of Enjoyment that issues in no Felicity:

> Being Swallowed up therfore in the Miserable Gulph of idle talk and worthless vanities, thenceforth I lived among Shadows, like a Prodigal Son feeding upon Husks with Swine. A Comfortless Wilderness full of Thorns the World was, or wors: a Waste Place covered with Idleness and Play, and Shops and Markets and Taverns. (C III.14).

It is the "Apostasie", characterised by the vain pursuit of "Barbarous Inventions", "rude vulgar and Worthless Things" which riddle men's minds with "Grubs and Worms . . . that . . . eat out all their Happiness", that forms the starting point for the course in Felicity that the Centuries propose. The intuition of the child is offered as an example, a parable, to provide an image of spontaneous natural apprehension — "Evry Man naturaly seeing those Things to the Enjoyment of which He is Naturaly Born" (C III.5) — but, in recovering from the alienation from his natural inheritance brought about by his "Apostasie" man must redirect this intuition and re-appropriate the riches of nature on the principles of "the Highest Reason".

The world, then, as it is "made by God" (C I.7) is to be Enjoyed on the principles of the highest reason. Equally, there is a world, made by men, in which true Enjoyment and Felicity become impossible, a "Miserable Gulph of Idle talk and vanities . . . A Comfortless Wilderness". Reason will guide man to true Enjoyment of the true world as the child was guided by intuition, but he must be capable of "thinking Well". If "by Nature, nothing is so Difficult as to Think amiss" (C I.8) the individual ~~apostacy~~ apostasy means that nature has been deserted: thinking amiss becomes the custom and manner of men in their world. Just as the customs and manners of men have eclipsed the intuitive natural perception of the infant eye, so "an Evil Habit, and Custom hav made it Difficult to think well" (C I.8). The "Difficulty of thinking well proceedeth from our selvs" (C I.8) and, as the apostacy must be overcome by pursuit of the highest reason in all things, so must "thinking Well" be established as an attitude to the true world. Thinking well about the true world of nature, man can strive for Felicity by avid Enjoyment of God's creation. Thinking ill, or following the riches of invention, he will be alienated from his inheritance as heir of the world and consigned to the comfortless wilderness of the false world. Enjoyment, however, as it involves thinking well and the highest reason as guides to Felicity, also involves a responsibility to mankind and to God. Enjoyment includes a thorough understanding and appreciation of the natural world and all natural things: "you were made to Prize them according to their Value" (C I.12), so Enjoyment is a duty.

The natural world as it is available for man's Enjoyment

has two main aspects. Man must "conceiv the World in [his] Mind", including the sun, earth, air and sea, and contemplate both its "Use and Value" and, in more abstract terms, its "Wealth and Glory" (C I.9). There is, in the need to appreciate "Use and Value" a practical, utilitarian emphasis: "Is not [the air] a marvellous Body to Breath in? To visit the Lungs: repair the Spirits, revive the Senses: Cool the Blood" (C I.21). Indeed, "The WORLD is unknown, till the Value and Glory of it is seen: till the Beauty and Serviceableness of its Parts is Considered" (C I.18). An appreciation of "Value and . . . Serviceableness" has a place in Enjoyment with that of "Glory . . . [and] . . . Beauty". Enjoyment, "Prizing", is a natural but not an easy process. If "you know your self, or God, or the World, you must of Necessity Enjoy it" (C I.16); but this necessity depends on knowledge of self, of God and of the world. Knowledge, in a very thorough and elaborate sense, is vital to Enjoyment, "Neither can any thing but Ignorance Destroy your Joys" (C I.16). True Enjoyment leads to a state of holiness, but "To be Holy is so Zealously to Desire, so vastly to Esteem, and so Earnestly to Endeavour it, that we would not for millions of Gold and Silver, Decline, nor fail, nor Mistake in a Tittle" (C I.13). Holiness itself implies resemblance to God, and by true Enjoyment, neither declining, failing nor mistaking "in a Tittle", man will indeed become literally God-like:

> we Pleas God when we are most like Him. we are like Him when our Minds are in Frame. our Minds are in Frame when our Thoughts are like his. And our Thoughts are then like his when we hav such Conceptions of all objects as God hath, and Prize all Things according to their value.
> (C I.13).

Enjoyment requires thinking well, thorough knowledge; it is having "such Conceptions of all objects as God hath".

The infant eye had been "Inquisitive" (C III.15), "Engaged with Enquiries" (C III.17) about the nature of the world: "Evry New Thing Quickened my Curiosity and raised my Expectation" (C III.22). After the apostacy the eye of reason was to be satisfied only with "the Highest Reason in all Things" (C III.18), with "Emanations of the Highest Reason" (C III.22) which were still connected with the world that had produced only intuitive wonder in the child. The man, then, "Having been at the University" (C III.36), was "led to the Study of the most Obvious and Common Things", such as "Air, Light, Heaven and Earth, Water, the Sun, Trees, Men and Women" (C III.53). He perceived "a Real Valuableness in all the Common Things" (C III.53), a practical use and value as well as a metaphysical wonder, and was aided in his study by "Natural Philosophy", the "Diligent inquisition into all Natures . . . so far forth as by Nature and Reason they may be Known" (C III.44). Natural Philosophy, itself "Nobly Subservient to the Highest Ends", includes "all Humanity and Divinity" and "openeth the Riches of Gods Kingdom . . . in a Wonderfull Maner, Clearing and preparing the Ey of the Enjoyer" (C III.44): it contributes directly to Felicity.

The world, the world of nature, is a major resource for this activity. By "Diligent inquisition" into God's creation man begins to see and understand God, nature, and all His works. Man must therefore engage diligently in "the Contemplation of GODS Works, wherin all the Riches of His Kingdom will appear" (C II.2): "we may see a little Heaven in the Creatures" (C II.12). In relation

to the world "A Noble Spirit . . . can survey it all, and Comprehend its Uses" (C II.12). He will find by contemplation and diligent inquisition that the world satisfies his physical curiosity and his metaphyscial longing: it contains, as it were hieroglyphically, "Truth", "a great Part of which is That the World is ours. So that indeed the Knowledge of this is the very real Light, wherin all Mysteries are Evidenced to us" (C II.2). Natural Philosophy contributes to the diligent inquisition by which man's knowledge of God's world will be advanced and "Mysteries . . . Evidenced to us".

"GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF" are the "Objects of your Felicity" (C II.100). The diligent inquisition of the eye of reason into God's world contributes to Felicity. The "Mysterie of Felicity" (C III.55), too, is "Evidenced to us", made plain and clear, by means of the study of the world. Men are easily discouraged in the study of Felicity, but "nothing but Felicity is worthy our Labour, because all other things are the Means only which conduce unto it" (C III.56). All knowledge contributes to Felicity, as divinity and humanity can be seen as parts of Natural Philosophy. It is because of this that man are discouraged: "the Labor required to[o] much Knowledg" (C III.55). "Aristotle describeth Felicity, when he saith Felicity is the Perfect Exercise of Perfect Virtu in a Perfect Life" (C III.68). Aristotle's definition provides an abstract idea of what is necessary to Traherne's Felicity — perfection in all senses — but here the full realisation of the practical implications of "Perfect Exercise", "Perfect Virtu" and "Perfect Life" is sought. Felicity is a rigorous "Labor" which for most men "required to[o] much

Knowledg". It is difficult to define precisely because it is a "Labor", not an abstract philosophical notion. It is, vitally, "Life", "Exercise", the "Perfect Exercise" of all man's faculties in relation to the entire potential of "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF".

Thus "whosoever will Profit in the Mystery of Felicity, must see the Objects of His Happiness, and the maner how they are to be Enjoyed, and discern also the Powers of His Soul by which he is to enjoy them" (C II.100). The "Objects of . . . Happiness" are essentially the objects of the world of nature created by God and the triple involvement of God, world and self. Knowledge and understanding of these is part of the "maner how they are to be Enjoyed". The "Maner", however, is "in evry thing of greatest Concernment" (C III.38). Study of the objects of Felicity is important but "it is not Sufficient for us to Study the most excellent Things unless we do it in the most Excellent of Maners" (C III.38). Given the perfection of the world as made by God there is "nothing wanting to Felicity but mine own Perfection" (C III.30). For this too the world offers a resource, if known and used in the right "Maner". God himself demonstrates the activity that is necessary to this form of perfection. God created the world, but that creation has to be re-affirmed at every moment of existence: the world is sustained in God from moment to moment as an idea or essence. "If He would but suspend his Power . . . Heaven and Earth would strait be abolished which He upholds in him self" (C II.87). Creation has not been in static existence since an initial divine fiat. It is upheld as a physical reality only by the continual exercise of God's creative faculty. Man possesses a comparable faculty which he too must exercise to the

full. God "upholds in himself" heaven and earth "as we do the Idea of them in our own Mind" (C II.87). The "Maner" in which the objects of creation are to be enjoyed is by direct participation by man in the exercise of a creative faculty that he shares with God. He does not create physical and material objects as such, but he maintains, creatively, an "Idea" of them, thus effectively "creating" them because it is only in this "Maner" (by having ideas exercised about them) that physical things attain their true significance, as images of God. The "Maner" is then the means both of the making real or realisation of the physical world as it was intended by God as a resource for man's understanding of Himself. It is also part of the exercise which helps man to perfection and his own God-likeness:

> [God] is all Ey and all Ear. Being therefore Perfect, and the Mirror of all Perfection, He hath Commanded us to be Perfect as He is Perfect: And we are to Grow up into Him till we are filled with the Fulness of His GODhead. We are to be Conformed to the Image of His Glory: till we becom the Resemblance of His Great Exemplar. Which we then are, when our Power is Converted into Act, and covered with it we being an Act of KNOWLEDG and Wisdom as He is. When our Souls are Present with all Objects, and Beautified with the Ideas and figures of them all. For then shall we be Mentes as He is Mens.
> (C II.84).

The ultimate union and communion with God is achieved by "an Act of KNOWLEDG", by activity and exercise applied to the Platonic conception of an "Idea" of all physical things, the physical things that God creates and re-creates continually and which man too creates for himself in knowing and understanding them. "Dead Things are in a Room containing them in a vain ~~amner;~~ Maner ; unless they are Objectively in the Soul of a Seer" (C I.100). The objects of

creation are "Dead" unless known and appreciated by man, who sees in them an "Idea", a vital spiritual significance and essence. "An Object Seen is in the Faculty seeing it, and by that in the Soul of the Seer, after the Best of Maners" (C I.100). The objects of man's happiness are to be enjoyed only as man perfects himself as "the Living TEMPLE and Comprehensor" (C I.100) of all things, knowing them thoroughly both as the objects and "Ideas" of God. Thus "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF" are known as objects of Felicity, a Felicity that man creates by creating for himself the objects of the world (of nature) and "thinking Well" about them.

Man is equipped for and capable of this, but he must always recognise and realise, make real in activity and use, "the Powers of His Soul by which he is to enjoy" (C II.100). He is "Insatiable": "It is the Nobility of Mans Soul that He is Insatiable" (C I.22). He is so great in Capacity that "the WORLD is but a little Centre in Comparison" (C I.19): "Your Understanding comprehends the World like the Dust of a Ballance, measures Heaven with a Span and esteems a thousand years but as one Day" (C I.19). In enjoying the world his potential for knowledge of the value and serviceableness of the world and his sense of wonder at its glory and beauty must be exercised to the full. He must "break the WORLD all into Parts, to examine them asunder . . . [and] . . . restore the Pieces to their Proper Places, being Perfectly Pleased with the whole Composure" (C I.23). The heir of the world must strive for a thorough and detailed knowledge of God's world and actually has a duty to fulfil his "Insatiable" ambition.

The individual, as heir of the world, is not alone. Everyone

is heir of the world equally. God made one man, Adam, to Enjoy the world, but every man may yet Enjoy the world as Adam did (C I.14): "as He maketh one, so He maketh evry one the end of the World" (C I.15). Thus "all the World is yours" (C I.16). One man's Enjoyment of the natural world does not trespass upon that of all other men. Rather, there is a possibility of individual Enjoyment within a communal Enjoyment of equals, each contributing to the Enjoyment of all others (C I.15). "The Services of Things . . . are Spiritual" (C I.26), so to "Prize in evry Thing the Service which they do you" (C I.27) is a possibility for all men, individually, all at once. In Enjoyment it is necessary to "lov Men so as to Desire their Happiness, with a Thirst equal to the zeal of your own" (C I.20). It is thus that

> You never Enjoy the World aright, till the Sea it self floweth in your Veins, till you are Clothed with the Heavens, and Crowned with the Stars: and Perceiv your self to be the Sole Heir of the whole World: and more then so, because Men are in it who are evry one Sole Heirs, as well as you.
> (C I.29).

The insatiable individual must appropriate the spiritual uses of all things for the purposes of his own Enjoyment, but the nature of Enjoyment is such that this does not preclude the equal Enjoyment of all other men. "Wine by its Moysture quencheth my Thirst" (C I.27), it has a recognisable "Use . . . and Serviceableness" that can be appreciated in itself, but to Enjoy it more thoroughly is to "consider it", to "Drink it Spiritualy" (C I.27) and see both its "Glory . . . [and] . . . Beauty" and the common good and Enjoyment it promotes in this individual Enjoyment. "Rejoice in its Diffusion . . . be of a Publick Mind

. . . take Pleasure in all the Benefits it doth to all" (C I.27). Thus to Enjoy, to appreciate natural objects as God's creation, as both useful and wonderful in themselves as part of both an individual and a common Enjoyment, is to be "Divine and Good" (C I.27).

Most men, however, neither know of nor care for this Enjoyment. They might, in childhood, have experienced the intuition, perception and Enjoyment outlined in the third of the Centuries, but they then submit for the remainder of their lives to "Apostasie" and its results: they "invent Ways to make them selves Miserable in the presence of Riches" (C I.32) and never attain the life of the highest reason. Men commonly pursue only the riches of invention, creating for themselves a world of darkness. "The Riches of Darkness are those which Men hav made . . . [they] . . . lead us from the Lov of all, to Labor and Contention Discontentment and Vanity" (C I.33). Pursuit of the riches of darkness produces "Repining, Envy, Malice, Covetousness, fraud, Oppression, Discontent and Violence" (C I.33) in the world of invention, in "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20) of deceived and deceiving men who "are ready to Eat and Devour one another" for the sake of "Particular and feeble Interests, fals Properties, Insatiable Longings" (C I.33). "There is so much Blindness and Ingratitud, and Damned folly" that this world of invention and darkness must be shunned, although the need to "hate the Abominable Corruption of Men in Despising" the world of nature is balanced by a need to Enjoy the real world while living in and surrounded by the false world (C I.31). There are "two worlds" (C I.7), or more truly two aspects of or two ways of looking at one world, one world which is

"both a Paradice and a Prison to different Persons" (C I.36). The "Prison" of men blindly pursuing the riches of darkness and invention is ever present and often difficult to escape from — "having made a Combination they seem Wise; and it is a hard matter to persuade them to either Truth or Reason" (C I.33) — but escape must be attempted. It may succeed. Certainly, it is "a Great Part of Happiness . . . to be freed from . . . Seducing and Enslaving Errors" (C I.36). That "Happiness" helps to make the world seem a "Paradice" rather than a "Prison" and involves "The Riches of Light" (C I.35), not those of darkness. It will lead to a genuine "Understanding of our Mutual Serviceableness to each other" (C I.35). In the world of light "we are all knit together" (C I.35) and retain an awareness of men "Toyling and Lamenting in Hell" (C I.36) in the prison of darkness. At a point of rest within the false world of "Idleness and Play, and Shops and Markets and Taverns", "in a Lowering and sad Evening" when "all things were dead and quiet", the young apostate felt "a certain Want and Horror . . . beyond imagination" (C III.23). "The unprofitableness and Silence of the Place dissatisfied me, its Wideness terrified me, from the utmost Ends of the Earth fears surrounded me" (C III.23). Only in realising that he was "concerned in all the world" (C III.23) did the real nature of Felicity become apparent. The riches of darkness "lead us from the Lov of all" but the riches of light offer a "Paradice" in which "the Understanding of our Mutual Serviceableness to each other" makes a "Liberal Soul Prone to Delight in the Felicity of all" (C I.38). Freedom from "Seducing and Enslaving Errors", from the "Customs and maners of men", is an initial step towards Felicity. The true Enjoyment of the heir of the

world becomes possible when the riches of nature replace those of invention, although, ultimately, "it more concerneth you to be an Illustrious Creature then to hav the Possession of the whole World" (C I.38). Enjoyment and Felicity themselves help man in his escape from the "Prison" of darkness. They free him from "seducing and Enslaving Errors" and help him to see the world as a "Paradice", forming in the process an "Illustrious Creature" who will be truly God-like, "Holy . . . Divine . . . Righteous . . . [and] . . . Just".

That man is "Insatiable" means that he has "Wants" which must be satisfied with "Supplies" (C I.40). These form a major link, the "Bands and Cements" (C I.51), between man and his creator, God, mainly through the medium of the world. "Felicitie [is] composed of Wants and Supplies" and "Insatiable" men were made to "Want like GODS" that "like GODS [they] might be satisfied" (C I.41). "You must Want like a GOD, that you may be Satisfied like GOD" (C I.44). There is a continuous circulation of wants and supplies: "all things proceeded from God to Man, and by Man returned to God" (C I.40). God offers man supplies in abundance — he "overfloweth Eternaly" (C I.42) — but the circulation demands that these should be gratefully accepted in fulfilment of man's wants. Nothing is truly Enjoyed unless it was truly wanted. Wants can be innumerable but must be fully appreciated when supplied, so that "Infinit Want is the very Ground and Caus of infinit Treasure" (C I.42). "Be Sensible of your Wants, that you may be sensible of your Treasures" (C I.45). To "be Sensible" is to be fully and urgently conscious of the real significance of things. So, if wants are to be infinite "This is a Lesson long enough: which you

may be all your Life in Learning" (C I.45). To be sensible of treasures supplied is part of knowledge and appreciation, of the thinking well that accompanies Enjoyment, and it is by thinking well that Felicity and God-likeness can be achieved. "He is most like GOD that is sensible of evry Thing" (C I.45). It is important that "His Wants always Delight Him, His Treasures never Cloy Him" (C I.44): wants, when supplied, are wasted if not recognised as treasures, if man is not thoroughly "sensible" of them — "they that Prize not what they hav are Dead" (C I.49). To endow everything with the life of the sense, thorough knowledge and appreciation, Enjoyment, is to create "Paradice": "To hav Blessings and to Prize them is to be in Heaven; To hav them, and not to Prize them, is to be in Hell I would say upon Earth: To prize them and not to hav them, is to be in Hell" (C I.47). Thus "the World is both a Paradice and a Prison to different Persons" and it is the "prizing" of "treasures" that defines and determines this. Not to prize them is to be "vicious and . . . Irrational" (C I.47) as "Customs and maners" oblige men to be; but when "freed from . . . Seducing and Enslaving Errors", "To Prize what we hav is a Deep and Heavenly Instruction. It will make us Righteous and Serious, Wise and Holy, Divine and Blessed" (C I.50). The true prizing of wants and supplies, connected with Enjoyment and the "Maner" in which "Dead Things" are made real, is a serious and complex process ("which you may be all your Life in Learning"), making a vital contribution to Felicity.

The notion of wants and supplies as the "Bands and Cements between God and us" (C I.51) produces another important consideration. God himself has wants, as is implied when man is

urged to model his "prizing" on that of God (C I.44). Among these wants was man himself: "[God] wanted the Communication of His Divine Essence, and Persons to Enjoy it" (C I.41). "He Wanted Spectators" (C I.41), so he made man. In the circulation by which all things come from God and are returned to him by man, God and man occupy an equal schematic position. Man himself seems almost to create God: "Be present with your Want of a Diety, and you shall be present with the Dietie" (C I.45). To want something and to be truly "sensible" of it is in effect to create it as an actual treasure, almost to create it — or at least to realise it, endow it with its full meaning, as "Dead Things" are given "Life". The circulation is a dialectical relationship, the reciprocity of which unsettles distinction between God and man. "What would Heaven and Earth be Worth, were there no Spectator, no Enjoyer?" (C II.90). Man is essential to God, for without the "Idea" of the world that he creates all its objects are only "Dead Things". Man must maintain this "Idea", as must God: "creation" is the full realisation, making real, of objects in a mutual process. The "Idea of Heaven and Earth in the Soul of Man, is more Precious with GOD then the Things them selvs" (C II.90). The "World within you is an offering returned" (C II.90), for man's knowledge and idea of the world shows his appreciation of it to God; but as "All Objects in all Worlds" are "seen in [God's] Understanding" (C II.84) so may man, as objects are "turned into the figure and Idea of them" (C II.78), "convert [his] Soul into a Thought containing Heaven and Earth" (C II.87). He may become, quite literally, God.

Without "an Act of the Understanding" (C II.76) all things are "Dead Things": it is in "Understanding" and its exercise, the

maintaining of "Ideas", that things have real existence. Ultimately man knows God only as he actively sustains his "Idea" of God ("Be present with your Want of a Diety, and you shall be present with the Dietie"). God is presented as the sum of the (Platonic) "Ideas", the very realisation of the Platonic [eidos], towards which man should strive in his pursuit of Felicity. Man can himself achieve that Felicity, that God-like state where his "Soul" may become "a Thought containing Heaven and Earth", "a Thought" identical to that by which God sustains creation. If "we lived the true life of Nature according to Knowledg", "we were to live the life of God", for then "the Objects of our felicity", "God's Treasures", would be "ours" (C III.58). To achieve Felicity is to "Enjoy the Treasures of God in the Similitud of God", for "the Treasures of GOD are the most Perfect Treasures and the Maner of God is the most perfect Maner" (C III.59). To achieve Felicity is to live fully in the image of God, "All Act, Pure Act, a Simple Being. Whose Essence is to be, Whose Being is to be Perfect" (C III.63). Thus able to "see more Clearly with the Ey of . . . understanding, the Beautie and Glories of the whole world", man will "hav Communion with the Diety in the Riches of GOD and Nature" (C III.67).

It is "Lov" that motivates God to make such possibilities available to man. "Lov" is the motive and means both of the granting of Felicity by God and the Enjoyment of it by man. "The very End for which GOD made the World was that He might Manifest His Lov", for "Lov is the true Means by which the World is Enjoyd" (C II.62). This establishes a "Divine Fellowship" (C I.53) between God and man, so that while "You are Created to be his Lov"

and "He is Afflicted in all your Afflictions", "in GOD you are concerned" (C I.53). "GOD is LOV" (C I.53) but man participates in this love as he does in God's knowledge. Knowledge and love are closely connected ("Knowledge and Love are so necessary to Felicity, that there can be no Enjoyment or Delight without them", CE 36). As man must know the world, so should he love it, for love is the essential complement to knowledge in the process of Enjoyment. By "Loving all as [God] doth" men will "be as GODS" (C II.52). The sacrifice of God's son in the crucifixion is an example of God's love for man, but still the means of redemption rather than "the End, for which we are Redeemed", the "End" itself being, in fact, Enjoyment and Felicity. Christ's "Lov to GOD and Man, in this Act, was infinit and Eternal" (C II.37), so "How vile are they, and Blind and Ignorant, that will not see evry one to be the Heir of the World, for whose sake all this was done:!" (C II.34). While in the first of the Centuries man is urged to "the Contemplation and Serious Meditation of [Christ's] Bloody Sufferings", for by considering the cross "we enter into the Heart of the Universe" (C I.56), such meditation remains subsidiary to the main theme. The crucifixion, redemption, is accomplished: man must celebrate and offer thanks for it as a supreme example of God's love but his real duty is to the end and not the means of redemption, the Enjoyment of the world which is a further comprehensive gift of God's love. "We should be all Life and Mettle and Vigor and Lov to evry Thing" (C II.68) in this avid pursuit of Felicity.

Such is God's love that he has given man complete "Liberty" (C IV.36): "He has given men freedom, and adventured the Power of Sinning into my Hands" (C IV.52). Man, in relation to God, is

placed in a position of absolute trust sustained by mutual love. Man deserves this trust because he returns God's love, and because he is so remarkable and insatiable a creation, himself the very image of God. "God made Man a free Agent for his own Advantage; and left him in the hand of his own Counsel" (C IV.42). To give man the "Power to displeas" (C IV.43) is to provide further evidence of God's love, and of his respect for his own creation. Pico della Mirandola and Hermes Trismegistus have celebrated the nature of man, but inadequately. The Hermetic concept of man as "a Great and Wonderfull Miracle . . . of all other the Greatest Miracle" (C IV.74,81) is true but only a part of the truth, for as Pico observes God made man entirely free with "neither a certain seat, nor a Private face, nor Peculiar Office" (C IV.76). Thus, God told Adam, "'Whatsoever seat or face or office thou dost desire, thou mayst Enjoy'" (C IV.76). Man has no "'Nature bounded within certain Laws'" but may be, should be, "the Honoured Former and Framer of [him] self'": "'thou mayst shape thy self into what Nature thy self pleaseth'" (C IV.76). Insatiable man, given liberty, was to exercise his Capacity as he pleased or thought best, bound only by the mutual love of God and man. He might be conceived as,

> A Messenger between the Creatures, Lord of Inferior things and familiar to those abov; by the Keeness of his sences, the Piercing of his Reason, and the Light of knowledg, the Interpreter of Nature, A seeming Intervall between Time and Eternity and the Inhabitant of both, the Golden link or Tie of the World, yea the Hymenaeus Marrying the Creator and his Creatures together.
> (C IV.74).

Man does stand at the head of creation, the bond between creation and its creator. He is part of nature but endowed with the "Sences

. . . Reason . . . and . . . Knowledg" that make him an image of God. For God, man is "the Image of all his Work" and the "Contemplator of the Universe" (C IV.75). He is the "Interpreter of Nature" (C IV.74). It is in these ways that man must exercise his infinite Capacity.

God set man in the world as the "Interpreter of Nature" and it is by Enjoying nature that man attains his own Felicity and advances his understanding of God. Therefore it might be asked "whether it were for his own End that God created the World or more for ours?" (C IV.63). This is a "Gordian Knot" (C IV.63) which cannot be unravelled. But the fact that the question can be asked is an essential reflection on the writing. Man "of all other the Greatest Miracle" is urged to exercise "the Infinit Extent of [his] Understanding" to the full, to realise and make real his own God-like Capacity. "Practice and Exercise is the Life of all", so man's "Life must be full of Operation" (C IV.95): "by frequent Meditation" he may become familiar with "celestial Things" (C IV.96) and with all the objects of creation in their idea and essence. Thus, Enjoying his own Felicity, he will become God-like, achieving "A Perfect Indwelling of the Soul in GOD, and GOD in the Soul" when "the fulness of the GODHEAD . . . shall dwell in us" (C IV.100). The "Contemplator of the Universe" and "Interpreter of Nature" exercises with complete liberty his infinite and insatiable Capacity and can actually be seen to achieve the God-like ideal for which he strives, becoming "All Act, Pure Act" as the ideal God is supposed to be. The question must be asked not only whether God created the world for himself or for man but also whether "God" does truly have independent

existence other than as a realisable potential within the mind of man, a mind "Capable of all Things". There is in man "a World of Lov to somwhat, tho we know not what in the World that should be" (C I.2): "we know not", that is, until Felicity has been actually achieved and the God-like man has such conceptions of the world, such an understanding of nature, as he conceives the (Platonic) Godhead to have. "Do you not feel yourself Drawn with the Expectation and Desire of some Great Thing?" (C I.2). That "Great Thing" may be no more and no less than man's literal God-likeness, the ultimate realisation of his own infinite and insatiable Capacity to know and understand and Enjoy; in effect to realise or effectively create in absolute liberty "All things", whether seen as "GOD, THE WORLD YOUR SELF" or simply as the overabundant and ever perceptually present "Objects of your Felicity" (C II.100). The writing of the text itself — similarly "Capable of all Things" — may be seen as a parable of this creative process of fulfilment.

The "true Estate of this World" (C IV.20) makes the practice of Enjoyment and the achievement of Felicity crucially difficult: "we are here upon Earth Turmoiled with Cares and often Shaken with Winds and by Disturbances distracted" (C II.89). The customs and manners of men increase this difficulty, a difficulty further complicated by the weakness of the individual, who finds it less trying to follow these customs and manners than "to be freed from . . . Seducing and Enslaving Errors". Thus "Men being mistaken in the Nature of Felicity, and we by a strong inclination prone to pleas them, follow a multitud to do evil" (C IV.44). Felicity, however, while remaining a metaphysical ambition as to its

ultimate goal, does have a practical aspect, "Practical Happiness" (C IV.1), which may offer a solution to this problem: "besides Contemplativ there is an Activ Happiness" (C IV.1). It is this active, practical happiness which is offered to men in "the true Estate of this World" (C IV.20).

This "true Estate" must be accepted, must be seen and recognised. "Here upon Earth" love is "under many Disadvantages and Impediments that maim its Exercise" (C IV.60). That exercise must, however, be continued under whatever disadvantage or impediment. Indeed, "it is in this world the more Glorious, if in the midst of these Disadvantages it exert it self in its Operations" (C IV.60). This is to re-affirm the metaphysical ambition but also to imply a more practical advantage. For Plato too the pursuit of the abstract ideal (ever, to him, only the more real) was essential to the ideal development of the actual individual, and also of the state. So too the seeker of Felicity will become "a Glorious friend to all Persons, a concerned Person in all Transactions, and ever present with all Affairs" (C IV.69). He "must ever be filled with Company, ever in the midst of all Nations" (C IV.69). The seeker of Felicity, while rejecting the world of invention as a resource for his happiness and fulfilment, should bring his experience of the world of nature to bear upon and relieve the state of man in the actual estate of the false world. "Here therefore is the Place of Trial" (C IV.60); there are, to both active and contemplative happiness, "hard lessons, in a pervers and Retrograde World to be practiced" (C IV.52). Love and Felicity are deeply involved in this world as in the metaphysical realm of ideals. Indeed "to love Mankind . . .

is the comprehensive Method to all felicity" (C IV.55). Practical happiness is as essential to the ultimate ideal as is contemplative happiness. Love exercised here under disadvantages and impediments enhances the value of the ultimate Felicity. As a "Place of Trial" this world is as important as any other to the attainment of Felicity by the practice of Enjoyment, part of which is the realisation of the highest potential in practical and immediate benefit to mankind as a whole. "This Life is the most precious Season in all Eternity, becaus all Eternity dependeth on it" (C IV.93). This is a significant emphasis:

> There are Christians, that place and desire all their Happiness in another Life, and there is another sort of Christians that desire Happiness in this. The one can defer their Enjoyment of Wisdom till the World to com: And dispence with the Increas and Perfection of knowledge for a little time: the other are instant and impatient of Delay; and would fain see that Happiness here, which they shall enjoy herafter.
> (C IV.9).

In fact "they that put of[f] felicity with long delays, are to be much suspected" (C IV.9). They are curtly dismissed: they "that can defer their felicity may be contented with their Ignorance" (C IV.9). To deny the possible achievement of Felicity even in this seductive but enslaving world of invention is to commit a heretical dereliction of human responsibility. "Philosophers are not those that speak, but Do great Things" (C IV.12). Contemplation must issue in activity, in practical happiness exercised to the benefit of all: "all men would be Brothers and Sisters throughout the whole World" (C IV.22). The naive happiness of the contemplative man isolated by his meditation in a paradise of abstract felicity is to be shunned, for "That knowledg which would make a man Happy among

just and Holy persons is unusefull now" (C IV.20). He "that would be Happy now must be Happy among Ingratefull and Injurious Persons" (C IV.20). "This is the true Estate of this World":

> On every side we are environed with Enemies, surrounded with Reproaches encompassed with Wrongs besieged with offences, receiving evil for Good, being disturbed by fools, and invaded with Malice . . . To think the World therfore a General Bedlam, or Place of Madmen, and one self a Physician, is the most necessary Point of Present Wisdom: an important Imagination, and the Way to Happiness. (C IV.20).

The pursuit of Felicity is thus to be conducted in "a General Bedlam, or Place of Madmen", in an actual and specific human society; in Hobbes' state of nature, the war of all against all in ignorance and evil; in that world and that society in which "the Nois of Bloody Wars, and the Dethroning of Kings" had been recently known. The "Ways of Eas and Repos" can be pursued and offered as an ideal, but that ideal must also issue in practical happiness that can be applied in the "General Bedlam" of actual life. The philosopher — "He is a Philosopher that subdues his vices, Lives by Reason, Orders his Desires, Rules his Passions, and submits not to his sences, nor is guided by the Customs of this World" (C IV.18) — is in "this world" like "a Physician" applying his remedies to a diseased society. Like Plato's philosopher emerging from the cave of shadows ("having seen the Secrets, and the Secret Beauties of the Highest reason", C IV.18) he can demonstrate to men the folly of their customs and manners, their habitual behaviour in society, and offer them a "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) that shows them the way to practical

happiness in this world and, as a result, an ideal happiness in an ideal world beyond.

The analogy of the physician is useful. The philosopher's practice, like that of the doctor, requires a long and rigorous training. "Is not a Philosopher a Lover of Wisdom?" (C IV.5). Enjoyment demands wisdom — man must "travail towards it by learning Wisdom" (C IV.9) — a wisdom that must be exercised. "Get Wisdom . . . get understanding" (C IV.7), then exercise that wisdom and understanding. "Wisdom is the Principal Thing yet all neglect her" (C IV.7). Only by doing, as well as by saying, "great Things" does a man become a philosopher; and only thus, supplied with wisdom and understanding, can he practice the active Enjoyment that will lead to Felicity and make it available also to other men. The pursuit of Felicity is no easy undertaking. "People are tickled with the Name of it, and som are persuaded to Enterprize a little, but quickly draw back when they see the trouble" (C IV.13). "A man that studies Happiness must sit alone like a Sparrow upon the Hous Top" (C IV.13), but he does not obscure his view of the real world in which he lives. The simple image of the sparrow itself implies the immediacy of practical happiness, a form of Felicity sought in a world in which a naked woman may image the ultimate Felicity: "Felicity is amiable under a Vail, but most Amiable when most Naked . . . It is som Part of Felicity that we must seek her" (C IV.13).

The practising philosopher must bring his wisdom and understanding to bear upon the pursuit of both active and contemplative happiness in individual and communal senses. He will be "ever in the midst of all Nations" (C IV.69) and must

"like a GOD, bring Light out of Darkness, and Order out of Confusion" (C IV.21). Applied to "the true Estate of this World", the metaphysical God-likeness of ultimate metaphysical unity acquires a practical aspect. The possibility of the Enjoyment of all by all mutually and at one and the same time means that the philosopher as "one of the most Illustrious Creatures in the World" (C IV.3) is himself to be Enjoyed by others in this world. The notion of the philosopher being "like a GOD" must reinforce the uncertainty about the absolute integrity of a God independent of man's conception of an ideal Godhead that runs through the writing. Traherne tells of an interesting experience which related to this (C IV.22-37). Seeking that, for the best purposes of both active and contemplative happiness, "all men would be Brothers and Sisters throughout the Whole World", the philosopher once thought that "the Cheapness of commodities, and the natural fertility of the . . . ground" should supply "enough for . . . all" (C IV.22). It is a fact of this world that man has "a Body to provide for, necessities to reliev" (C IV.60), and Felicity itself, as part of a whole "Divine Philosophy", must satisfy these, just as it deals also with the use and serviceableness of all "Common Things". This primitive communism was inadequate, however, for the earth became "cursed and Barren" and "there was danger of want, a necessity of Toyl and labor and Care, and Maintainance of Servants" (C IV.22). Faced with this the philosopher turned to the assumed natural "Charity of Men" but found, as he showed in the first part of the third of the Centuries, that "mens hearts are Cursed and Barren as the Ground" (C IV.22). So he turned to

God: he "fled unto God as his last Refuge" (C IV.22), or, rather, to the world of nature as created by God (C IV.23). The idea of God became the "last Refuge" of the God-like philosopher. Thus he "conceived it his Duty and much Delighted in the Obligation; That he was to treat evry Man in the Whole World as the Representativ of Mankind" (C IV.27). As the representative of mankind certainly, but also as the representative of God, each equally the heir of the world and image of God. Each has a Capacity capable of thorough realisation as Felicity, the ideal Good and the Perfect Life, is pursued by Enjoyment in activity and contemplation. "Glorious Principles well Practised . . . establish Heaven in the Life and Soul" (C IV.37).

The empty book was "Capable of all Things" and in it would be realised the "infinit Space of our Understandings" (C II.82), the infinite Capacity of both writer and reader, exemplified in the infinite Capacity of the infant's empty mind. In the reading of the book may be learned the "objects of Felicitie, and the Way of enjoying them" (C V.1). Thus exercised "our Thoughts expaciate without Limit or Restraint" (C V.2) and, momentarily perhaps, man becomes God, replete in his ultimate God-likeness, achieving in complete communion with the Godhead a displacement of that Godhead as man himself seems able "to live the life of God" (C III.58). Finally, however, the life of God is lived in mutual amity, by man in God and God in man; and by all men at once in the ultimate Felicity. In the communion of Oneness with God man achieves "Bliss and Happiness", being "wholly Busied in all Parts and places of his Dominion" (C V.10). Man is "a Great and Wonderfull Miracle" (C IV.74) but it is to the external and

absolute God, who simply and necessarily exists, that he owes his creation and the creation of the world made to be Enjoyed by him. Thus, finally, God remains inviolate, "In him, the fountain, in him the End" (C V.1). "God is the Object, and God is the Way of Enjoying" (C V.1). The realised Capacity of mind and book are dedicated to Him, and the book, filled in essence if not in fact, is closed.

CHAPTER 9

Christian Ethicks

The title Christian Ethicks suggests little of the book's actual nature. Traherne deliberately turns away from more conventional seventeenth century treatises on morality. Although he later quoted from The Whole Duty of Man (1658; attributed to Richard Allestree), among the most popular works of the century, he states that, because of the existence of this and presumably other similar works, he "need not treat of Vertues in the ordinary way" (CE 3). Similarly, "the French Charron" (CE 3) has presented a sceptical view of the world, showing the necessity of "Wisdom" to the maintaining of a man's individual integrity. So Traherne speaks not of the "Duties enjoyned by the Law of GOD", nor of the "Prudential Expedients and Means for a man's Peace and Honour on Earth" but rather of "the reality, force and efficacy of Vertue . . . its Beauty, Dignity and Glory" by way of the "advantages" he "gained in the nature of Felicity (by many years earnest and diligent study)" (CE 3). It is this "Felicity" that is the true subject of the book, while "Ethicks" is one important manifestation of the "advantages" integral to the study and experience of this. Felicity is a guiding principle behind Christian Ethicks because "Vertue" and "Felicity" are connected. Felicity is an aid and authority in the discussion of "Vertue"; and as all the chapters of the book represent some of the aspects of "Vertue", so this in turn is bound up with the striving for Felicity. The true weight of meaning that Felicity carries for Traherne is, as ever, difficult to realise. A religious discipline or practice in which

moral and intellectual qualities are brought to bear upon the whole activity of life, it represents a state of mental and physical attainment that involves knowledge, understanding and appreciation of many or all of man's powers and potentials particularly as these are used in what is conceived as his dynamic relations with God and His creation, and by implication with other men. This practical or social aspect is by no means negligible: "The reality of Religion consists in the solid practice of it among the Sons of men that are daily with us" (CE 246). The inclusive aspect of Felicity in Christian Ethicks should be stressed, most positively as it concerns Traherne's idea of Capacity, man's Capacity in all senses, but here notably that of the intellect. "Vertue", for example, as a manifestation of Felicity, the fundamental theme of the book, is conducive to "Glory"; it leads to the "Temple of Bliss" and is "immeasurably transcendent . . . in all kinds of Excellency" (CE 3). It is also "full of Reason" (CE 3), which suggests that "all kinds of Excellency includes forms of "Vertue" more thoroughly fulfilling that any easy definition of Felicity may imply. Traherne has said that Felicity requires "many years earnest and diligent study" (CE 3).

An attempt to define Felicity may provide some insight into Traherne's motivation in Christian Ethicks and the way in which this notion, proposed as an ultimate end of human attainment, involves many aspects of thought and action. "Felicity is rightly defined, to be the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in a perfect Life by Perfect Virtue" (CE 19). This derives from Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics and repeats the formal definition of Felicity given in the Centuries (C III.68):[1] it is linked with

a Platonic concept of the pursuit of the ideal in all things, of perfection in an absolute sense. In the Commonplace Book "Beatitude", the "BLESSEDNESS" of the title of Christian Ethicks and a form of Felicity, is defined as "the operation of the rational Soul, according to the best virtue in a perfect life" (CB 21^{v}); this too is from Aristotle, via Theophilus Gale. In the Early Notebook the source was Eustachius: "felicitas formalis est operatio animae rationalis secundum virtutem perfectissimam in vita perfecta" (EN 9). Traherne's own synthesis of Aristotelian and Platonic elements in the definition of Felicity as the fulfilment of man's life is not original but is parallel to similar statements in contemporary writing. "That the End of Man's Life is Felicity; all men most readily allow: and, if you ask him, no man will deny, that he aims at that End": thus Walter Charleton in 1656.[2] For him, too, "Ethicks" helps man to Felicity. "By Ethicks, or Morals, we understand that part of Philosophy, which hath for its proper Object the End, or Final and main scope of Mans Life; containing certain Directions, and Precepts, for the right information of his Understanding, and (consequently) the conduct of his Will, in the Election of real Good, and Avoidance of Evil, in order to his attaining the true End of his life, the Supreme Good, or Felicity".[3] Traherne's subject, "Ethicks", has an esential inclusiveness and centrality as a contribution to seventeenth century thought: it is against this background that his own originality may be studied. "Ethicks", then, is a part of "Philosophy" concerned with "the End, or Finall and main scope of Man's Life", the "right information of his Understanding" and the attainment of a Felicity which is still the "Supreme Good" over

and above, but including, these other concerns. Felicity, then, the "Supreme Good" in a Platonic sense, links Aristotelian and Platonic elements in Traherne's thought and, more importantly, can be seen as an inclusive, all-inclusive, philosophical notion about man's life — his thought, actions and beliefs — and the ends towards which this is directed. There is, ~~futher~~ further, a fundamental emphasis on reason and rationality, and on intellectual attainment, as aspects of the pursuit of Felicity as the inclusive end of ethical behaviour.

Traherne's own definition, particularly his insistence on the perfection of "Soul", "Life" and "Virtue", demonstrates the inclusiveness of Felicity. So do his concerns with "fruition" and "acting". The degree of ambition that this implies may be seen in the following passage, expanding on one part of the definition of Felicity:

> Perfect life is the full exertion of perfect power. It implies two things, Perfection of Vigour, and perfection of intelligence, an activity of life, reaching through all Immensity, to all Objects whatsoever; and a freedom from al Dulness in apprehending: An exquisite Tenderness of perception in feeling the least Object, and a Sphere of activity that runs parallel with the Omnipresence of the Godhead.
> (CE 20).

If the "Supreme Good" to which a study of "Ethicks" leads is Felicity, the pursuit of which has as part of its object "Perfect life", which in turn involves "perfection of intelligence", "activity of life", "all Objects" and apprehension of them, it is clear that Traherne's book should not be considered as an enclosed moral or theological treatise. Rather, he is engaged in exploring a philosophical and metaphysical universe. Knowledge

cannot be refused. Traherne claims as his object "to make the Glory of GOD appear, in the Blessedness of Man" (CE 3). "Man was made in GODS Image, that he might live in his Similitude" (CE 16). In this context, Aristotle's Felicity is only temporal in comparison with "that felicity which is here begun, and enjoyed for ever" (CE 58); a Felicity, the "Supreme Good" of a broadly based philosophy, which is "here begun" less by introspective meditation ("There is a Glory in the Work which the Silent Habit is uncapable of", CE 191) than by vigorous expatiation in thought and language over the whole of creation. "Deus me solum dedit toti mundo, toto Mundum mihi soli, GOD gave me alone to all the World, and all the World to me alone" (CE 58). Where moral effect is sought it is seen as the secondary result of a perfected "Life", a perfected and active awareness of and response to all and actual phenomena.

"It is the Prerogative of Humane Nature to understand it self, and guide its Operations to a Known End" (CE 13). These, the opening words of the first chapter of Christian Ethicks, reflect an emphasis fundamental to Traherne's thought: "the Prerogative of Humane Nature to understand". To understand not only itself but as much of knowledge of all things as is possible: "How ambitious we ought to be of Knowledge, which is the Light wherein we are to adorn and compleat our selves" (CE 63-64). Quoting Proverbs III.13-19,21 (notably "The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens"), Traherne insists on the need to "get Wisdom, and. . . Understanding", "For the same Wisdom which created the World, is the only Light wherein it is enjoyed" (CE 184). The idea of man's

ability to share or participate in God's creation in a very direct sense continues Traherne's thorough stress on the mutual aspect of "Wisdom". Creation can, and must, be known by man by way of a "Wisdom" the same as that of God. Then "the Glory of GOD" will appear "in the Blessedness of Man".

Similar to the mutual human and divine participation in "Wisdom" is that in "Reason". Reason is "the formal Essence of the Soul of Man", which guides him towards "those Things, which are absolutely supreme" (CE 14). It is "a transcendent faculty, which extendeth to all Objects, and penetrates into all misteries", questioning the "Use and End of . . . things" (CE 109). Traherne insists, like the Cambridge Platonists, that "Faith is by Reason confirmed, and Reason is by Faith Perfected" (CE 112) and he quotes the much-cited text, 1 Peter III.15 (which he translates "be ready always to give a reason of the Hope that is in us", CE 109), to this effect. "Faith" and "Reason" are reconciled and complementary. Of scholastic derivation, suggesting a traditional inheritance through formal education, this reconciliation between two areas, the apparent conflict between which provoked considerable doubt in the seventeenth century, shows an attempt to retain the possibility of something like the scholastic summa, a comprehensive view of the whole of attainable knowledge and truth, whether theological or scientific. The manner in which this is expounded, however, in combination with original and other contemporary ideas, is sympathetic and indeed conducive to inquiry into all aspects of thought and experience, including the detailed research into natural phenomena that was to develop from and through Natural Philosophy: theological and scientific

truth are, like faith and reason, reconciled and complementary.

Traherne's discussion "Of Knowledge" is found in Chapter Five of Christian Ethicks. "Knowledge and Love are so necessary to Felicity, that there can be no Enjoyment or Delight without them" (CE 36). "Knowledge" and "Love", like "Wisdom", are seen as abstract realms shared by man and God, but here the mutual participation is extended beyond "Knowledge" itself. Knowledge is abstract, and its shared aspect is important. But its abstract importance is of less concern than its realisation as a power. That function of the mind of God or man which can be called "Knowledge", that faculty whereby the known is retained, is less significant than the faculty of knowing itself, which is an active exercise:

> He that would not be a stranger to the Universe, an Alien to Felicity, and a foreigner to himself, must know GOD to be an infinite Benefactor . . . and his own Soul the Possessor of all, in Communion with the Deity . . . the knowing Man is the friend of GOD. (CE 41-42).

The "Divine Amity" (CE 42), the communion with the deity, is attained actively, not simply by the possession of a mutual faculty: "if we would be perfect, as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect, our Power of Knowing must be transformed (into Act,) and all Objects appear in the interior Light of our own understanding" (CE 36-37). This stress on activity, and the importance of the appropriation of things known ("Objects") to "our own understanding", connects with Traherne's notions about perception, ways of seeing and knowing, and his idea of the transformation of "Dead Things" (C I.100) into living images of God. "Knowing" can be part of man's striving towards perfection,

but also represents a more thorough striving towards this communion with the deity than a state of passive "Knowledge". It is also part of an activity less directly concerned with this communion, because in the insistence on man's part in the participation of knowing (on "our own understanding") the striving towards perfection turns back on itself — or, rather, completes a circle. The emphasis falls on man the knowing subject, the conceiver of his own Capacity and its potential realisation. "Knowing" is one of man's fundamental links with either his conceived world or his conceived God, with the life he realises outside himself. One way in which communion with the deity is achieved, it is also the means by which this communion can be conceived as an idea and that idea acted upon.

Traherne also considers the "Power of Knowing" as it relates only to the man's "Soul" and without reference to the "Divine Amity". "The Power of Knowing is vain if not reduced into Act; and the Soul a melancholly and Dreadful Cave, or Dungeon of Darkness, if void of Knowledge" (CE 36). Further, "It is not to be denied, that every Being in all Worlds is an Object of the Understanding" (CE 40). God's "very Essence is seated in infinite Knowledge", so "GOD himself, without Knowledge and Love, could not well exist" (CE 36). If "every Being in all Worlds is an Object of the Understanding" may there not be a more fundamental sense in which "GOD himself, without Knowledge and Love, could not well exist" ?

> GOD himself and his holy Angels are Objects of the Understanding . . . their Fruition depends upon that Act of the Understanding by which they are considered . . . Whereupon it follows that the infinite value of all these is seated

> in the intellect; and as the Power, so the Act of Knowledg, on which their Fruition dependeth, is of infinite use and Excellency. (CE 38).

The emphasis on the "Act" of understanding and the way this leads to the "Fruition" of objects is important, and is developed most powerfully in the context of Traherne's insistence on the human power of knowledge. The importance of the "Act" of the understanding that leads to the "Fruition" of objects, their realisation in the human mind, could be seen as an emphasis that leads to a version of the universe in which "God" is a mental realisation (an "Act" of "Fruition") of a form of Platonic Ideal. This view is resisted, the scheme of Traherne's notions about perception being based on a three-fold system including the "Eye", the "Object" and the "Light", God. "God", however, must still be regarded as an essentially Platonic function in a world centred very much on man's ability to know, his "Power of Knowing". "GOD as he is the Life and fountain of all Felicity, the End of all Perfection, and the Creator of our Being . . . is most fit to be Known. Plato makes him the very Light of the understanding" (CE 41). "God" as the Ideal, as "the End of all Perfection", is that thing "most fit to be known", to be brought to "Fruition" by man's "Power of Knowing".

It is man's Capacity, and his curiosity and insatiableness, that are so often stressed. "I know that Men are the greatest Treasures, and that your interest is extended through all worlds, and your Possessions illimited" (CE 249): "It is the Glory of man, that his Avarice is insatiable, and his Ambition infinite, that his Appetite carries him to innumerable Pleasures, and that his

Curiosity is so Endless, that were he Monarch of the World, it could not satisfie his Soul" (CE 54). "Magnificence" is a means of participation in the "Divine Amity" (CE 247-57). God, by "Loving", gives his "Wisdom, Goodness and Power", doing with them "all that we could devise . . . had they been our own" (CE 249). As this is God's magnificence, so should man be magnificent and give, or return, all to God. God "infinitly desires to be loved of [man]" so he must return God's love, his "Wisdom, Goodness and Power", through his own understanding. "Upon this Return all the sweetness of the rest dependeth" (CE 250-51) for without it "all the Creation is vain and frustrate" (CE 252-53). Thus God's "Wisdom, Goodness and Power" depend for their realisation on man and on his Capacity and "Magnificence". The products of man's activity, though, are ultimately re-appropriated by God: "Could we make millions of Worlds . . . they should all be his" (CE 252-53).

It is in this way that Traherne's thought is amenable to all forms of intellectual pursuit. Man's "Magnificence must be shewn in something [God] cannot do" (CE 252-53). Philosophically, "It is the Prerogative of Humane Nature to undertsand it self", but it is also man's duty to realise his Capacity in activity, active knowing and discovery: "man can see, and know, and love any object" (CE 48). It is perhaps in this area that many of Traherne's notions coalesce into the central importance of knowledge and appreciation, Enjoyment, of God's creation: "man can see" any object by way of the complex of perception elaborated by Traherne; he can "know" by way of his intellectual Capacity; and he can "love", Enjoy, know thoroughly and appreciate, realise and give thanks for the thing through his whole life and being, all his powers. "Outward

Security, and inward Contentment" are necessary to Felicity" (CE 198): "contentment" is "the full satisfaction of a Knowing Mind" (CE 216), the complete fulfilment of man's active Capacity. "Knowing" is the thoroughly worked realisation of the plenitude of "Knowledge" ("Never so much clear Knowledge in any Age", CE 283). "Love" is comparable to "Knowledge" in its importance to Felicity, seen again as a divine attribute in which man participates, another all pervading medium in which things are seen to exist and to be capable of having meaning given to them. For man himself "Love" implies and includes also the sense of Enjoyment that is a close approach to Felicity itself. Man "can love any object": any research into God's creation can be accommodated within Traherne's philosophy. "There is a Wisdom above us, and a Wisdom within us, that maketh all things to work together for good to them that love GOD, and nothing is able to hurt us but our selves" (CE 221). Traherne continues the emphasis on the self and the possibility of choice this offers once the partly subjective process of perception is recognised: "God" is proposed or at least fully realised only by the "Knowing" man, so if man chooses (and it is assumed that he will choose — he must choose because of his "Reason") everything can be contained in a system which will continue to include God and man. This system is always based upon the world, man and God (corresponding to the object, eye and light of Platonic "Vision", CE 41) and the relationship between these, the circulation of the world and its objects from God to man and from man to God.

Knowledge cannot be refused, because it leads to understanding of God's works in God's greatest work, man, his image. The world is

a basic resource through which this knowledge and understanding is acquired. "To see beyond all Seas, and through all interposing Skreens and Darknesses, is the Gift of the Understanding, and to be able to Love any Object . . . any Thing that is Good . . . is the Property of the Soul" (CE 54). God is the cause and end of all things, and includes all things in himself. He is inevitably the "Best of all possible Ends", so anything that man discovers is inevitably part of God: it is "Good" ("If it be wonderful, admire and adore it", CE 86). Man is not restricted by any limits. He may, and is even required to, attain God's own knowledge: "Possibilities are innumerable, so that nothing less than infinite Wisdome can find out that which is absolutely the Best" (CE 65). The licence by which anything may be included in man's relation with God is basically two-fold. God made everything, so man's knowledge of anything and everything should help his knowledge of God (and this he may attain in the most complete sense); and the partly subjective nature of perception means that any knowledge can be incorporated or melted into the over-riding "Idea" of "God", the means by which "all things work together for good". So what is known becomes less important than the way in which it is known, "the way in which things are known" or "knowing all things to be of God", being one possible definition of "religion":

> To Know that we are Men, encompassed with the Skies, and that the Sun and Moon, and Stars are about us, with all the Elements and Terrestrial Creatures is matter of Sence and Reason; as it is also, that we have the dominion and use of them . . . But their utmost Perfection is discovered only by the Truth of Religion; that alone discloses their first Cause, and their last End, without which all their Intermediate

Uses are Extremely Defective.
(CE 112).

This "religion" is the doctrine of Enjoyment, essential to man's ultimate achievement of Felicity.

Traherne's thought is circular: everything, every aspect of everything is essentially and ultimately connected. The main aspects of the thought converge in ideas of "ways of seeing" in relation to knowledge and Enjoyment. Everything is significant, connected, involved ("there is a certain kind of Omnipresent greatness in the smallest action", CE 242): "There is a certain kind of sympathy that runs through the Universe, by vertue of which all men are fed in the feeding of one . . . All are touched and concerned in every one" (CE 241). This is another aspect of the participation of all men in powers and potentials shared by God, but the realisation of man's Capacity and the attainment of knowledge of all things is achieved only by retaining the notion of seeing "in the right manner", of "thinking Well" as the basis of all knowledge and all knowing. This too should properly be seen to derive from God. "A confused Apprehension makes us blind" (CE 190), but "A mind in Frame is a Soul clothed with Right Apprehensions" (CE 26): there is a need for the "clear and perfect apprehensions" (CE 37) of the man whose mind is attuned to that of God in order that things may be seen or known correctly. "Vertuous Love" proceeds from "a well governed understanding" and exists only in a "Will" which is "guided by Reason" (CE 49): a "clear Beholder" will see God's wisdom, goodness and glory in God's kingdom (he will Enjoy God) as "one Intire Object, and every Thing in it a Part of that Whole"

(CE 69). The "Soul" and its powers can be applied "rightly" or "wrongly". When "well exerted" they become "vertues" and it is only by this "Exertion" and by the recognition of man's place in the circulation of the world from and to God through man himself that "we attain . . . Happiness" (CE 27).

Here again is the insistence on the individual "Exertion" and the need for the "clear and perfect apprehensions" that lead to true knowledge and Enjoyment:

> the Soul being made in the Image of GOD, who is Love by his Essence, must needs be like him in Power and Inclination, and is made for nothing else but the Attainment of its perfection, so that it can never rest, till it actually love after his similitude. Some operation it must of Necessity have. For as all Life, so all pleasure is founded in Action.
> (CE 48).

Exertion and activity are continually stressed as fundamental aspects of man's **striving**, and through the emphasis on this Traherne demonstrates his awareness of the difficulty, actual and experienced, of the task he proposes: "our present Estate" is one of "Labour" not "Reward", of "Trial" not "Fruition" (CE 191). He emphasizes the need for "Toyl, and Sweat . . . for the promised Wages" and, although the "Triumph" will be "attended with ornaments and trophies far surpassing the bare Tranquillity of idle peace", "we must expect some blows" (CE 19). So inactivity and "wrong" apprehension and "Use" are the source of all faults, and it is the responsibility of the individual to set these right: "We rail on the World when the fault is in our selves. The most of Men professing Virtue are but Children in Worth . . . Vertue is base and not Vertue, while it is remiss: It never shineth gloriously and irresistibly, till it be acted in a desperate

manner" (CE 281). The stress on activity returns to the consideration of the nature of perception, the way in which things become evident to the human mind and the way in which this then reacts to them. "Matter" is the "Dreg of Nature, and Dead without Power", while "Act is the Top and Perfection of Nature, it is the fulness of Power, the fountain and the means of all that is; for Power by transforming itself into Act, becometh an act, and by that Act produceth and perfecteth all its Work both outward and inward; so it is the Means of all its Productions" (CE 68). God is the sum of all "Operations", and his "Power" is exerted as "Act" (CE 69). "In God, to Act and to Be, are the same Thing. Upon the suspension of his act, his Essence would be gone" (CE 76). While "it is his eternal Act that gives us a Being" (CE 267) it is yet true that "in the acts of our Understanding we shall eternally be with him" (CE 268). "Act" is another part of the mutual participation of the human and the divine. "Act" "produceth and perfecteth all . . . Work both outward and inward; so it is the Means of all . . . Productions". God's "Act" creates, but so too does man's. God made the world, but he made it for man. Only in the activity and the mind of man is the created world fully realised, made real:

> To make Visible Objects useful it was necessary to enshrine some Spirits in Corporeal Bodies, and therefore to make such Creatures as Men, that might see, and feel, and smell, and taste and hear, and eat and drink by their Bodies, and enjoy all the Pleasures of the World by their Souls: And by their Souls moreover know the Original and End of all, understand the design of all, and be able to celebrate the Praises of the Creator . . . It was expedient also to make their Bodies finite, that they might converse together: but their inward

> Intelligences of endless reach . . . that they might also be able to search into the depth of all Things, and enjoy Eternity; Nay, that they might be fit Recipients for the infinite Bounty and Goodness of GOD, which is infinite in all its Communications. (CE 182).

Here is the true "Magnificence" of man, his place in creation, sustaining and re-creating by way of his "Act" those things which he conceives as being the results of the "Act" of God. "Man seems to be the Head of all Things visible, and invisible, and the Golden clasp whereby Things Material and Spiritual are United. He alone is able to beget the Divine Image, and to multiply himself into Millions . . . by him alone GOD and his works are United" (CE 104). It is from this that the insistence on man's importance issues, complementing the continued emphasis on man's aspiration towards God-likeness, "our Inclination to be like GOD, to Please him, and to Enjoy him". Man, the Golden clasp" uniting the material and the spiritual, able to reproduce the divine image, is able to "aspire after . . . the very throne of GOD" (CE 122). "Nothing less than the Wisdom of GOD will please the GOD-LIKE Man" (CE 285). Traherne looks towards the realisation of "The fulness of the GODHEAD in the Soul of Man, the Perfection of the Divine Image, a Transformation for Glory, to Glory . . . where all Regions, and Ages, and Spaces, and Times, and Eternities shall be before our Eys, and all Objects in all Worlds at once Visible, and infinitely Rich, and Beautiful, and Ours!" (CE 123). Such emphasis on man's individual Capacity culminates in a form of self-love, which, carefully distinguished from that of Hobbes (CE 261), is also love for others:

> the very reason why [the soul] enjoys it self

> and all its own Treasures, is because it loves it self: And the more it loves him the more it will be delighted with his functions. It is more concerned, it feels more, it sees more, it tastes more, it possesses more, it rejoyces more in its Object than it self. The imagination and fancy that is in Love frames all the thoughts of its Beloved, in it self; it has an exquisite and tender sence of every change and motion in the mind of its Beloved.
> (CE 274-75).

The "imagination and fancy that is in Love", capable of "framing" thoughts, is parallel to the process by which "Dead Things" are realised as vital aspects of God's creation, in which God's love is itself immanent (C I.100).

For Traherne, man's "Power" becomes "Act" which "produceth and perfecteth all its work both outward and inward: so it is the Means of all its Productions". Thus "it was necessary to enshrine some Spirits in Corporeal Bodies" in order to "make Visible Objects useful". Things are "Dead" ("Matter" is the "Dreg of Nature, and Dead without Power") and come to life, are realised and made real, only in the mind of man ("They are not conceived, unless they are quickened with the Life of the Receiver", CE 270). So man has a responsibility to seek out all knowledge, to know, realise and Enjoy all things, and aspire to the knowledge of God. "A Grateful Soul" who acknowledges all things in this practice "holds Intelligence with GOD" (CE 271). He becomes one with God:

> if we excite and awaken our Power, we take in the Glory of all Objects, we live unto them, we are sensible of them, we delight in them, we transform our souls into Acts of Love and Knowledge . . . We are not divided from, but united to [God], in all his Appearances, Thoughts, Counsels, Operations; we adorn our Souls with the Beauty of all Objects whatsoever, are transformed into the Image of God, live in communion with him, nay live in him, and he in us.
> (CE 52-53).

Once the initial fiat is accomplished, man is as much responsible for creation as God, for he is the only means by which all things can be held together and realised in life. Traherne does not propose a Berkeleyan idealism. For him physical objects do have a material existence, but only as "Dead Things". These "Dead Things", however, form the basis of man's enhancing and realising activity, making them fully real, giving them an ideal significance, in his understanding and Enjoyment of them and his thanksgiving for them. The objects of creation were made for man, and for man to return them to God realised as ideals of Enjoyment. Thus man discovers God, the world and himself. Christian Ethicks ends by asserting that "GOD is, and is a Rewarder of all them that diligently seek him" (CE 286). In this seeking, however, man also achieves his own Felicity and God-likeness, the satisfaction of an insatiable Capacity to Enjoy all things. The reward, perhaps, is rather in this fulfilling activity as it traverses and transcends every aspect of known and knowable experience in the ideal pursuit of an ideal good, Felicity, the "Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in a perfect Life by Perfect Virtue". Seeking this "Perfect fruition" man is propelled, propels himself, towards his own ideal realisation as heir of the world and image of God; towards his own literal God-likeness.

Postscript

"There is a certain naivete about all this; it is too simple".[1] Carol Marks, perhaps Traherne's most sympathetic commentator, betrays an impatience many have felt with some of his more convoluted notions — in this instance the idea of "communication" by which all men Enjoy equally all others' Enjoyment:

> In the end, that simplicity diminishes our faith in Traherne's sincere but facile professions of practicality. His conviction of man's goodness can inspire us to admiration, perhaps to envy, but not to assent. Opposed in his own day by the theology of Original Sin, Traherne's joyful optimism crashes today against the Berlin wall, the Vietnamese war. The [Church's] Year Book, with its exhortations and "Motivs to Hope", leads us to a melancholy recognition that most of the seventeenth-century expression of devotion is for us dry bones, and that, however much we long to believe, Traherne's strong and loving faith is for us but a dream.[2]

What is in question here, surely, is not the naivete or otherwise of Traherne's writing but the naivete of a certain attitude to reading. It is unreasonable, and arguably pernicious, to raid texts of the past in search of a still viable "faith". This is, it seems, a thorough perversion of any sensitive textual study, or at least an absurd reduction of it. Yet this reaction is common: it haunts attention to Traherne's writing and has indeed made Traherne's "naivete" a critical embarrassment.

This thesis provides no answer to this or any other problem and draws no specific conclusions. The thesis seeks rather to direct or re-direct a train of thought than to establish a

triumphant prospect. Leaving aside such questions as those raised for some by "the Berlin wall, the Vietnamese war" — in relation to Traherne, surely, of extreme irrelevance — the apparent naivete of his critical reputation may again be measured through the words of his contemporary, Rochester. In "A Satyr against Reason and Mankind" (c.1675) Rochester berated the philosophy of a divine like Traherne. In a final cynical gibe he pretends to take back his words:

> If upon earth there dwell such God-like men,
> I'll here recant my paradox to them.
> Adore those shrines of virtue, homage pay,
> And, with the rabble world, their laws obey.[3]

This thesis seeks to suggest that, in so far as any full and coherent image of Traherne has emerged from it, the "rabble world" of criticism may itself have a paradox to recant. For through Rochester's poem — as through the words of many contemporary writers examined here — Traherne can be seen as the Restoration writer and philosopher he truly was. His "naivete" for modern readers is that of many others in his own time, whether John Everard, Theophilus Gale, Robert Boyle or Isaac Barrow. His writing demands full and serious attention both as writing and as it traces and develops a "Divine Philosophy" (C IV.3) in relation to "the true Estate" of the contemporary world (C IV.20). It is an attempt to accord it such attention that this thesis represents, seeing Traherne's life at Oxford and in London, his interest in contemporary natural philosophy and his intellectual ambition and accomplishment as the basis for a reading of his three major prose works as "real" in the sense of being not derivative models of meditative practice nor sincere but facile

attempts to formulate an eternal "faith" but as writings issuing from and relating to both a real life in a real world and the activity of an acute and comprehensive mind. The writings are serious attempts to expound a "Divine Philosophy" which encompasses the whole realm of human thought and action in so far as this was understood by this one man in his own time and place. Felicity, as the aim of "Divine Philosophy", is a comprehensive ideal that seeks to absorb all that is good in the world of thought and action in an attempt to achieve an ultimate and absolute Good. In conclusion it can only be said that the affirmations and speculations now drawing to a close are the product of an exploration of Traherne's life and writing in the contexts of the "Divine Philosophy" thus produced and the specific contemporary world from which this emerges and to which it relates.

No more definite or definitive conclusion is possible, for this is no place to define or limit the experience this thesis seeks to urge upon the reader. Traherne himself did not conclude two of the three writings examined here: it is part of the very nature of what he says and the way in which he says it that conclusions are impossible. There is only life and activity, the life of Enjoyment striving continually for the fruition of Felicity and God-likeness, "the Perfect fruition of a Perfect Soul, acting in a perfect Life by Perfect Virtue" (CE 19). The writing, like Traherne's "Thoughts", must "expaciate without Limit or Restraint" (C V.2) and will achieve its own "fruition" only in a thorough and responsive reading of it. It is to provide material for such a reading and to suggest something of the possible direction and depth this might have that this thesis has been written.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

Introduction

[1] The idea of the tabula rasa is found in Heraclitus, the Stoics and the Schoolmen. Margoliouth noted Dobell's comparison of Traherne's phrase with one in John Earle's Microcosmographia (1628): "A Childe. . . . His Soule is yet a white paper unscribled with observations of the world, wherewith at length it becomes a blurr'd Note-booke" (John Earle, Microcosmographie: or, A Peece of the World Discovered, ed. Edward Arber, London, 1868, p.21; M I.238). A closer analogy is in Richard Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie: "The soule of man [is] therefore at the first as a booke, wherein nothing is, and yet all thinges may be imprinted; we are to search by what steppes and degrees it ryseth unto perfection of knowledge" (Richard Hooker, Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie, London: By John Windet, [1594], p.58).

[2] [John Locke], An Essay concerning Humane Understanding (London: By Elizabeth Holt for Thomas Bassett, 1690), pp.6,8. See also Book One, Chapter 2, passim. (pp.4-14).

[3] Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan: or, The Matter, Forme and Power of A Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civill (London: For Andrew Crooke, 1651), pp.3,4.

[4] Bertram Dobell, "An Unknown Seventeenth Century Poet", The Athenaum, 3780 (1900), pp.433-35.

[5] The Poetical Works of Thomas Traherne, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1903).

[6] Thomas Traherne, Centuries of Meditations, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1908).

[7] Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944), pp.5-11.

[8] Traherne's Poems of Felicity, ed. H. I. Bell (Oxford, 1910).

[9] Grosart originally thought that the poems might be by Theophilus Gale, whose The Court of the Gentiles (1669-77) Traherne annotated in his Commonplace Book.

[10] See for example W. Lewis Jones, "Thomas Traherne and the Religious Poetry of the Seventeenth Century", The Quarterly Review, 200 (1904), pp.437-64; Rufus M. Jones, "Thomas Traherne and the Spiritual Poets of the Seventeenth Century", Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (London, 1914), pp.320-35.

[11] See for example Adeline Cashmore (ed.), The Mount of Vision:

A Book of English Mystic Verse (London, 1910).

[12] W. Lock, "An English Mystic", The Constructive Quarterly, 1 (1913), pp.826-836; Elbert N. S. Thompson, "Mysticism in Seventeenth Century English Literature", Studies in Philology, 18 (1921), pp.170-231; Freida Lohrer, Die Mystik und ihre Quellen in Thomas Traherne (Zurich, 1930).

[13] See W. Lewis Jones in The Quarterly Review, 200 (1904), pp.437-64; and J. W. Proud, "Thomas Traherne: A Divine Philosopher", The Friends' Quarterly Examiner, 51 (1917), pp.65-82.

[14] T. O. Beachcroft, "Traherne and the Doctrine of Felicity", The Criterion, 9 (1930), pp.291-307; "Traherne and the Cambridge Platonists", The Dublin Review, 186 (1930), pp.278-90.

[15] Anon., "A Student of Felicity", The Spectator, 97 (1906), pp.157-58, was an early attempt to rationalise what Beachcroft called the "Doctrine of Felicity".

[16] Q. Iredale, Thomas Traherne (Oxford, 1935).

[17] Iredale, p.2.

[18] Iredale, p.52.

[19] Iredale, p.43 (quoted from Benjamin Whichcote).

[20] Gladys I. Wade, "Thomas Traherne as 'Divine Philosopher'", The Hibbert Journal, 32 (1934), pp.400-08; "Traherne and the Spiritual Value of Nature Study", The London Quarterly and Holborn Review, 159 (1934), pp.243-45.

[21] Gladys I. Wade, "Susanna Hopton", The English Review, 62 (1936), pp.41-47; Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944).

[22] Thomas Traherne, Poetical Works, ed. G. I. Wade (London, 1932).

[23] Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne, pp.32-37, 41-43.

[24] Wade, p.89.

[25] Wade, p.116.

[26] Wade, p.136.

[27] Wade, p.197.

[28] Wade, p.196; title of Chapter 20 (pp.215-38).

[29] John Donne (1572-1631); George Herbert (1593-1633). J. B. Leishman, The Metaphysical Poets: Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Traherne (Oxford, 1934), pp.188-224; H. C. White, The Metaphysical Poets: A Study in Religious Experience (New York, 1936).

[30] Robert Ellrodt, L'Inspiration Personelle et l'Esprit du Temps chez les Poetes Metaphysiques Anglais (2 vols., Paris, 1960), vol.2, pp.261-392; Margaret Willy, Three Metaphysical Poets (Writers and their Work No.134, London, [1961]), pp.31-42.

[31] Louis L. Martz, The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne and Milton (New Haven and London, 1964).

[32] Louis L. Martz, The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature (1954; second edition, New Haven and London, 1962).

[33] The Poetry of Meditation, p.22.

[34] The Poetry of Meditation, p.13.

[35] John Malcolm Wallace, "Thomas Traherne and the Structure of Meditation", The Journal of English Literary History, 25 (1958), pp.78-89.

[36] The Paradise Within, p.54.

[37] The Paradise Within, p.35.

[38] The Paradise Within, p.xvii; pp.54-55.

[39] The Paradise Within, p.44.

[40] The Paradise Within, p.55.

[41] James M. Osborn, "A New Traherne Manuscript", The Times Literary Supplement (1964, p.928).

[42] K. W. Salter, Thomas Traherne: Mystic and Poet (London, 1964).

[43] Salter's M.A. thesis had a more explicit emphasis: The Nature of Traherne's Mysticism (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Bristol, 1954).

[44] Margaret Bottrall, "Traherne's Praise of Creation", Critical Quarterly, 1 (1959), pp.126-33.

[45] Bottrall, p.130.

[46] Bottrall, p.130.

[47] G. H. Cox, "Traherne's Centuries: A Platonic Devotion of 'Divine Philosophy'", Modern Philology, 69 (1964), pp.10-24.

[48] Cox, pp.10-11.

[49] S. Sandbank, "Thomas Traherne on the Place of Man in the Universe" in A. Shalvi and A. A. Mendilow (eds.), Studies in English Language and Literature (Scripta Hierosolymitana vol.17, Jerusalem, 1966), pp.121-36.

[50] Sandbank, p.121.

[51] Sandbank, p.136.

[52] Robert Ellrodt, "Scientific Curiosity and Metaphysical Poetry in the Seventeenth Century", Modern Philology, 61 (1963-64), pp.180-197.

[53] Ellrodt, p.197.

[54] Marjorie Hope Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle: Studies in the effect of the 'New Science' upon seventeenth-century poetry (1950; revised edition, New York, 1966).

[55] Nicolson, p.196.

[56] Nicolson, p.203.

[57] Rosalie Colie, Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox (Princeton, 1966), pp.146-47. See also Rosalie Colie, "Traherne and the Infinite: the ethical compromise", The Huntington Library Quarterly, 21 (1957), pp.69-82.

[58] Paradoxia Epidemica, p.149.

[59] Paradoxia Epidemica, p.167.

[60] Paradoxia Epidemica, p.167.

[61] Maren-Sofie Røstvig, The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal (Oslo Studies in English, no.2, Oslo and Oxford, 1954), pp.266-97.

[62] Brian Connolly, Knowledge and Love: Steps toward Felicity in Thomas Traherne (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1966).

[63] Connolly, p.9.

[64] Connolly, p.12.

[65] Connolly, p.15.

[66] Joan Webber, The Eloquent 'I': Style and Self in Seventeenth-Century Prose (Madison and London, 1968). See also Joan Webber, "'I' and 'Thou' in the Prose of Thomas Traherne", Papers in Language and Literature, 2 (1966), pp.521-534.

[67] The Eloquent 'I', p.4.

[68] The Eloquent 'I', p.220.

[68] The Eloquent 'I', p.244.

[69] The Eloquent 'I', p.253.

[70] The Eloquent 'I', p.253.

[71] The Eloquent 'I', p.220.

[72] Stanley Stewart, The Expanded Voice: The Art of Thomas Traherne (San Marino, Calif., 1970), p.105.

[73] Stewart, p.120.

[74] Bottrall in Critical Quarterly, 1 (1959), p.129.

[75] Stewart, p.164. See George Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie (1589; facsimile reprint, Menston, 1968), pp.197-98.

[76] A. L. Clements, The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1969); A. J. Sherrington, Mystical Symbolism in the Poetry of Thomas Traherne (St. Lucia, 1970); R.D. Jordan, The Temple of Eternity: Thomas Traherne's Philosophy of Time (Port Washington and London, 1970).

[77] Carol L. Marks, "Thomas Traherne and Cambridge Platonism", Papers of the Modern Language Association of America, 81 (1966), pp.521-34.

[78] Thomas Traherne, Christian Ethicks, ed. Carol L. Marks and George Robert Guffey (Cornell Studies in English, vol.43, Ithaca, New York, 1968).

[79] Carol L. Marks, "Thomas Traherne's Commonplace Book", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 58 (1964), pp.458-65; "Traherne's Church's Year Book", PBSA, 60 (1966), pp.31-72; "Thomas Traherne's Early Studies", PBSA, 62 (1968), pp.511-36; "Thomas Traherne's Ficino Notebook", PBSA, 63 (1969), pp.73-81.

[80] Joan Webber in The Eloquent 'I', p.225.

[81] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, "A Satyr against Reason and Mankind", ll.58-71 (The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, ed. David M. Vieth, New Haven and London, 1968, p.96).

[82] "A Satyr", ll.76-77,84-85 (Vieth, p.97).

[83] "A Satyr", ll.92-93 (Vieth, p.97).

[84] "A Satyr", ll.94-96 (Vieth, pp.97-98).

[85] "A Satyr", l.104 (Vieth, p.98).

[86] John Milton, Paradise Lost, Book 12, ll.575-80 (The Poems of John Milton, ed. Helen Darbishire, London, 1961, p.446).

[87] Paradise Lost, 12, l.582 (Darbishire, p.446).

[88] Paradise Lost, 12, ll.582-84 (Darbishire, p.446).

[89] Paradise Lost, 12, ll.587, 589 (Darbishire, p.446).

[90] John Milton, Of True Religion, Haeresie, Schism, Toleration, And what best means may be us'd against the growth of Popery (The Works of John Milton, ed. Frank A. Patterson, New York, 1931-40, vol.6, pp.165-80), p.165.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

Traherne and Oxford

[1] See M I.xxiii-xxxiii; Brasenose College Register 1509-1901 (Oxford, 1909).

[2] Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, ed. P.Bliss (4 vols., London, 1813-20), vol.3, p.1016; vol.4 pp.192,254,309. The relevant details are printed in M I.xxiii.

[3] The transcripts for 1662 and 1663 are signed by the Churchwarden, one George Gwillim. See Angela Russell, "The Life of Thomas Traherne", The Review of English Studies, n.s.6 (1955), pp.34-43.

[4] See M I.xxiv; The Brasenose Book of Benefactors (Oxford, 1909); Brasenose College Quatercentenary Monographs (2 vols., Oxford, 1909), vol.1, Monograph 4, p.51.

[5] Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944), p.116.

[6] Carol L. Marks, "Thomas Traherne's Early Studies", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 62 (1968), pp.511-536.

[7] Except possibly in the Select Meditations manuscript at Yale (early 1660's), of which only a transcript was available for this thesis.

[8] A Catalogue of the Portsmouth Collection of Books and Papers written by or belonging to Sir Isaac Newton (Cambridge, 1888), pp.47-48. There were at least two further editions of Eustachius' Ethica in England in the seventeenth century: London, 1677; Cambridge, 1693.

[9] Carol L. Marks, in "Thomas Traherne's Early Studies", PBSA 62 (1968), p.522, gives the following correspondence between Bacon's text and Traherne's notes:

Book of De Augmentis	No. of pages in WFB	No. of pages Traherne quotes from
I	54	26
II	54	18
III	40	12
IV	35	8
V	36	6
VI	63	3
VII	32	0
VIII	84	0
IX	9	3

[10] See pp.219-20 of this thesis.

[11] See Bodleian Mss. Rawlinson D.1452, D.254; Sloane 1472; and Hugh Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen (London, 1970), pp.110-128.

[12] A. DeJordy and H. F. Fletcher (eds.), A Library for Younger Schollers (Urbana, 1961).

[13] The compiler of A Library for Younger Schollers used the Bodleian Library for reference, and Barlow was known to have compiled such a list. DeJordy and Fletcher, in the edition cited above, quote "several reasons for believing" that the Library is by Barlow.

[14] Traherne was looking for the Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore (Isidore Mercatoris Collectio Decretalium) as published in Jacques Merlin's editions of Collected Councils (Paris, 1524; Cologne, 1530). The false ascription of these to Isidore of Seville (c.560-636) is a major theme of Roman Forgeries. Thomas Barlow was an authority on church history, and Traherne may well have consulted him while working on his treatise. Barlow published Popery: or, The Principles and Positions approved by the Church of Rome are very dangerous to all in 1679, six years after the appearance of Roman Forgeries.

[15] Hugh Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen (London, 1970), p.125.

[16] Rubius (Antonio Rubio, 1548-1615), Logica mexicana siue Commentarii in universam Aristotelis Logicam; Smiglecius (Marcin Smiglecki, 1562?-1618), Logica Marcin Smiglecki . . . in qua quicquid in Aristotelis Organo pertractatur; Christoph Scheibler, Philosophia compendiosa seu philosophia exhibens logicae, physicae . . . compendium (sixth edition, Oxford, 1639); Jacob Zabarella, Jacob Zabarella in duos Aristotelis libros Posteriores Analyticas commentarii (1587).

[17] Pererius, B. Pererii . . . de communibus omnium rerum naturalium principis et affectionibus, libri quindecim qui plurimum conferunt, ad eos octo libros Aristotelis qui de physica auditu inscribuntur (1579); Rubius, Antonio Ruvio Rodensis . . . commmentarii in octo libros Aristotelis de physico auditu (1616).

[18] John Milton, Prolusiones III: Contra Philosophiam Scholasticam, (The Works of John Milton, ed. F. A. Patterson, vol.12, New York, 1936, pp.158-73).

[19] Robert Ellrodt, "Scientific Curiosity and Metaphysical Poetry in the Seventeenth Century", Modern Philology, 61 (1963-64), p.197.

[20] Although appointed Professor of Anatomy only in 1651, it is likely that Petty had left Oxford before Traherne came into residence at Brasenose. The date of his departure for Ireland as cartographer to Cromwell is uncertain, but it was early in the 1650's, and Petty may have spent some time in London after leaving Oxford. See Edmond Fitzmaurice, The Life of Sir William Petty 1623-1687 (London, 1895), pp.15-21.

[21] The Advice of W.P. to Mr. Samuel Hartlib, for the Advancement of some particular parts of Learning (1647), reprinted in The Harleian Miscellany, vol.6 (1745), pp.1-13.

[22] The work of Bacon particularly recommended by Barlow is of interest in relation to Traherne: Sylva Sylvarum: or, A Natural History. In Ten Centuries (1627). While the numerical organisation of short prose passages or essays was sufficiently common to make the form of "centuries" entirely coincidental, this does illustrate, aptly, that the form was not limited to "meditations" or to what might be identified as essentially "literary" or "religious" work.

[23] See particularly Charles Webster, The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform 1626-1660 (London, 1975).

[24] Hugh Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen (London, 1970), p.119.

[25] See Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down (1972), Penguin edition (Harmondsworth, 1975), pp.58,71,84-84,196-98.

[26] Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan: or, The Matter, Forme and Power of A Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill (1651), Penguin edition, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth, 1968), p.728.

[27] Traherne's image is probably derived from Bacon (WFB I.486).

[28] H. W. Robinson, "An Unpublished Letter of Dr. Seth Ward", Notes and Records of the Royal Society, 7 (1950), pp.68-70.

[29] R. G. Frank, "Science, Medicine and the Universities of Early Modern England", History of Science, 11 (1973), p.200.

[30] Frank, p.200.

[31] Frank, p.201.

[32] Charles Webster, The Great Instauration (London, 1975), p.143.

[33] Allen G. Debus, The Chemical Philosophy: Paracelsian Science and Medicine in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, vol.2 (New York, 1977), p.400.

[34] John Aubrey, Brief Lives, ed. Andrew Clark, vol.2 (Oxford, 1898), p.301.

[35] See Charles Webster, The Great Instauration, Table 1, pp.166-69.

[36] The Great Instauration, p.154.

[37] The Great Instauration, p.161.

[38] The Great Instauration, p.161; Brief Lives, vol.2, p.301.

[39] ~~Rosalie Colie, Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox (Princeton, 1966), pp.146-47.~~ Note cancelled.

[40] Walter Pope, The Life of . . . Seth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, ed. J. B. Bamborough (Oxford, 1961), p.25.

[41] The Great Instauration, p.170.

[42] Robert Hooke, Micrographia (London: By John Martyn for James Allestry, 1665), $A4^{v}$.

[43] Richard Watkins, Newes from the Dead: or, A True and Exact Narration of the Miraculous Deliverance of Ann Green (Oxford: By Leonard Lichfield for Thomas Robinson, 1651). There were four editions during 1651.

[44] Seth Ward, A Philosophical Essay (1652), second edition (Oxford: By Leonard Lichfield, 1655), $A2^{v}$.

[45] The Works of the Hon. Robert Boyle, ed. Thomas Birch, second edition (6 vols., London, 1772), vol.6, pp.49-50.

[46] The Works of the Hon. Robert Boyle, vol.6, pp.49-50.

[47] The Petty Papers: some unpublished writings of Sir William Petty, ed. Henry W. E. Petty-Fitzmaurice (2 vols., London, 1927), vol.2, pp.172-73.

[48] Robert Merton, Science, Technology and Society in Seventeenth Century England (New York, 1970), p.75.

[49] Boyle says of Some Considerations that "divers parts were sent to the Presse in 1660, or 1661 and this present Year 1663"; "the very Last Essay . . . was written divers Years before". (UEP $B2^{r}$).

[50] This and the succeeding quotation from C IV.74 form part of a long quotation at this point in the Centuries from Pico della Mirandola's De Hominis Dignitate (1496). Both Traherne and Boyle make use of earlier Platonic thought when it is parallel to their own. Boyle particularly admired "Hermes Trismegistus", for example, as a (natural) "philosopher" (UEP 53).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

Traherne, Credenhill and Susanna Hopton

[1] Traherne's signature appears on transcripts of the Credenhill parish registers for the first time in 1664. From then until 1669 the transcripts are signed and/or written by Traherne. See Angela Russell, "The Life of Thomas Traherne", The Review of English Studies, n.s.6 (1955), pp.34-43; and M I.xxiv-xxv,xxxv-xxxviii.

[2] Yale University Library Ms. Osb.88. See James Osborne, "A New Traherne Manuscript", The Times Literary Supplement (1964), p.928.

[3] Louis L. Martz, The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne and Milton (New Haven and London, 1964), pp.207-8.

[4] See pp.84-88 of this thesis.

[5] Carol Marks Sicherman, "Thomas Traherne's Ficino Notebook", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 63 (1969), pp.73-81.

[6] The Ficino Notebook, like Poems of Felicity, passed from Burney's collection to the British Museum (M I.xiv).

[7] Traherne drew on some of the notes in the Ficino Notebook in the Centuries and Christian Ethicks: e.g. C I.40 (FN 51^{r-v}), C III.60 (FN 48^{r}), CE 60 (FN 51^{r}).

[8] Theophilus Gale, The Court of the Gentiles: or, A Discourse touching the Original of Human Literature, Part Two (Oxford: By William Hall for T. Gilbert, 1670), pp.223-24.

[9] An abstract of the notes and their sources is given in an Appendix, pp.344-47 of this thesis.

[10] For Susanna Hopton see the Dictionary of National Biography; Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944), pp.79-88; M I.xxxiv-xxxv.

[11] A SERIOUS and PATHETICAL CONTEMPLATION Of the Mercies of GOD, IN SEVERAL Most Devout and Sublime Thanksgivings for the same. PUBLISHED By the Reverend Doctor HICKS, At the request of a Friend of the Authors. LONDON; Printed for Samuel Keble, at the Turks-head Fleet Street, over against Fetter-lane-end, 1699.

[12] A COLLECTION OF MEDITATIONS AND DEVOTIONS, In Three Parts. I. MEDITATIONS on the CREATION. II. MEDITATIONS and DEVOTIONS on the LIFE of CHRIST. III. DAILY DEVOTIONS and THANKSGIVINGS, &c. BY THE FIRST REFORMER of the DEVOTIONS IN The Ancient Way of OFFICES;

Afterwards reviewed and set forth By the late LEARNED Dr. HICKES. Published by N. SPINCKES, M.A. LONDON: Printed for D. MIDWINTER, at the Three Crowns in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1717.

[13] John Austin's Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices (Paris, 1668) were "Reformed" anonymously by Hopton and published by Hickes in 1700 (Devotions In the Ancient Way of Offices, with Psalms, Hymns, and Prayers for Every Day of the Week and Every Holiday in the Year. Reformed by a Person of Quality, and Published by George Hickes, D.D. London: For W. Keblewhite and J. Jones, 1700).

[14] See Catherine A. Owen, "The Authorship of the 'Meditations on the Six Days of Creation' and the 'Meditations and Devotions on the Life of Christ'", Modern Language Review, 56 (1961), pp.1-12; and Thomas Traherne, Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation, intro. George Robert Guffey (The Augustan Reprint Society Publication No.119, Los Angeles, 1966), pp.i-xi.

[15] Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation (1717 Collection 1-91).

[16] The Preface to the 1717 Collection cites examples from the Hexaemeric tradition: Ambrose (six books; c.386); Basil (c.330-379; nine homilies); Anastasius of Sinai (fl.640-700; twelve books); John Philoponus (sixth century; seven books); George of Pisidia (seventh century; 1,910 lines); Bede (673-735; four books) (1717 Collection $A7^{r-v}$).

[17] Meditations and Devotions upon the Life of Christ (1717 Collection 92-320).

[18] Daily Devotions: consisting of Thanksgivings, Confessions and Prayers, With a Preparative Exercise to a Good Death. To which is added The Sacrifice of a Devout Christian: or, His Preparation for, and Reception of, the Blessed Sacrament (1717 Collection 321-423).

[19] Hickes was at Oxford between 1662 and 1673, and went abroad in the following year; Spinckes was an undergraduate at Cambridge between 1670 and 1674.

[20] "25th September 1673. Jonathan Edwin. Entred . . . under the hand of Master Warden MEARNE a coppy or booke intituled Dayly devotions consisting of thanksgiving confessions and prayers, in two parts." "25th September 1673. Jonathan Edwin. Entred for his copie under the hand of Master Warden MEARNE a coppy or booke intituled Roman Forgeries, or a true account of false records detecting the counterfeit antiquities of the Church of Roome, by Tho. Traherne S.T.B." (A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers; From 1640-1708 A.D., vol.2, London, 1913, pp.471-72).

[21] See Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944), p.87.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

Traherne and London

[1] "6th August 1674. Jonathan Edwin. Entred . . . under the hand of Master GEORGE HOOPER and Master Warden ROYCROFT a book or copy entituled Christian Ethicks or, Divine morality Opening the Way to blessedness by the rules of Vertue and reason" (A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers; From 1640-1708 A.D., vol.2, London, 1913, p.487); ed. E. Arber, The Term Catalogues, 1668-1709 A.D., vol.1 (London, 1903), pp.184-85.

[2] Bodleian Ms.Eng.th.e.50. The first edition was Centuries of Meditations, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1908).

[3] Louis L. Martz's belief in the importance of formal meditation to seventeenth century writing, for example, and his insistence on the "literary technique" "relentlessly pursued by Traherne" in the Centuries (The Paradise Within: Studies in Vaughan, Traherne and Milton, New Haven and London, 1964, p.44).

[4] For different emphases suggested by the handwriting, consider the possible variations, God; God; GOD; GOD; G O D; etc., and for problems of transcription see M II.233-34.

[5] Compare Rosalie Colie's remark: "[Traherne] has caught the full and filling plenitude of things . . . [in] . . . the very process of writing, in which the true meaning of all things is revealed as revealing itself" (Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox, Princeton, 1966, p.167); see also Joan Webber's remarks on the "interpenetration of meaning" and "constant overflow of meaning" found in the Centuries (The Eloquent "I": Style and Self in Seventeenth Century Prose, Madison and London, 1968, p.244).

[6] For example: Meditations on the Six Days of the Creation (six "meditations" and six poems corresponding to the six days of creation); The Church's Year Book (following the feasts and festivals of the church year); Commonplace Book (notes arranged under alphabetical headings).

[7] See WFB II.323-680. The collection was edited after Bacon's death by William Rawley.

[8] Bodleian Ms.Eng.poet.c.42. The first edition was Poetical Works, ed. Bertram Dobell (London, 1903).

[9] British Library Ms.Burney 126. The first edition was Poems of Felicity, ed. H. I. Bell (Oxford, 1910).

[10] Full details of the poems as they appear in the Dobell folio and in Poems of Felicity are to be found in Margoliouth's edition (M I.xii-xvii). Wade's edition, which prints the poems from the two

manuscripts separately, is also useful (Poetical Works, ed. Gladys I. Wade, London, 1932). Wade suggested that the Poems of Felicity were copied by Philip Traherne as late as 1700-1723 (Thomas Traherne, Princeton and Oxford, 1944, p.176).

[11] See particularly "The Salutation" (M II.4); "Wonder" (M II.6); "Innocence" (M II.14): "The Rapture" (M II.30); "The Approach" (M II.36); "An Infant-Ey" (M II.86).

[12] Bodleian Ms.Eng.th.e.51. See M I.xvii-xx; and Carol L. Marks, "Traherne's Church's Year Book", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 60 (1966), pp.31-72.

[13] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), pp.31-34.

[14] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), p.31.

[15] The Auncient Ecclesiastical Histories, tr. Meredith Hanmer (1577; London: T. Vautrollier, 1585); Daniel Featley, Ancilla Pietatis: or, The Handmaid to Private Devotions (London: For N. Bourne, 1626); The Meditations, Soliloquia, and Manuall of the Glorious Doctor S. Augustine (1631; English Recusant Literature, 1558-1648, vol.83, Menston, 1972); William Austin, Devotionis Augustinianae Flamma: or, Certayne Devout, Godly and Learned Meditations (London: For J. Legatt and R. Mab, 1635); Jeremy Taylor, The Great Exemplar of Sanctity According to the Christian Institution (London: By R. N. for Francis Ash, 1649); Edward Sparke, Scintillula Altaris: or, A Pious Reflection on Primitive Devotion (London: By T. Maxey for Richard Marriot, 1652); Anthony Sparrow, A Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer (1665; London: For Timothy Garthwait, 1668).

[16] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), p.31.

[17] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), p.43.

[18] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), p.43.

[19] Bodleian Ms.Eng.poet.c.42. This is in fact the second, and larger, part of the Dobell folio: poems (ff.2^{r},3^{v}-16^{r}), Commonplace Book (ff.16^{v}-96^{r}).

[20] Carol L. Marks, "Thomas Traherne's Commonplace Book", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 58 (1964), pp.458-465.

[21] Marks in PBSA, 58 (1964), p.459.

[22] Marks in PBSA, 58 (1964), p.462.

[23] The Divine Pymander of Hermes Mercurius Trismegistus . . . Translated . . . By . . . Doctor Everard (London: By Robert White for Thomas Brewster and Gregory Moule, 1650); Theophilus Gale, The Court of the Gentiles: or, A Discourse touching the Original of Human Literature (Part One, Oxford: By Henry Hall for Thomas Gilbert, 1669; Part Two, By William Hall for Thomas Gilbert, 1670); Isaac

Barrow, The Duty and Reward of Bounty to the Poor (London: By Andrew Clark for Brabazon Aylmer, 1671).

[24] Roman Forgeries: or, A True Account of False Records Discovering the Impostures and Counterfeit Antiquities of the Church of Rome. By a Faithful Son of the Church of England. (London: By S. and B. Griffin for Jonathan Edwin, 1673). See A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers; From 1640-1708 A.D., vol.2 (London, 1913), pp.471-72; and ed. E. Arber, The Term Catalogues, 1668-1709 A.D., vol.1 (London, 1903), p.154.

[25] Gladys I. Wade, Thomas Traherne (Princeton and Oxford, 1944), p.116.

[26] The Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore were first used at the Council of Soissons in 853 and seem to have been generally accepted after the tenth century. See ed. J-P. Migne, Patrologia cursus completus, Series latina, vol.130 (Paris, 1880), pp.2-1178. The Decretals were rejected by the Centuriators of Magdeburg when they compiled their church history (Ecclesiastica historia Centuriatorum Magdeburgensium, 1559-74), but defended by Franciscus Torres (Adversus Magdeburgensis Centuriatores pro Canonibus Apostolorum et Epistolis Decretalibus Pontificum Apostolicorum, 1572). The controversy was ended by David Blondel (Pseudo-Isidorus et Turrianus Vapulentes, 1628) but enquiry continued into the nature of and reasons for the forgery rather than into the question of authenticity per se. Traherne discusses Torres' part in the controversy (RF 96-105) and mentions Blondel (RF B5^{v}).

[27] Petrus Crabbe, Concilia Omnia (1538) (RF 117-21); Bartholome Carranza, Summa Conciliorum (1549) (RF 116-17); Laurentius Surius, Conciliorum Omnium (1567) (RF 117-21); Severinus Binius, Concilia Generalia (1606) (RF 156-72).

[28] Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, ed. Osmund Airey, vol.1 (Oxford, 1897), p.454.

[29] John Milton, Of True Religion, Haeresie, Schism, Toleration And what best means may be us'd against the growth of Popery (The Works of John Milton, ed. F. A. Patterson, vol.6, New York, 1934, pp.165-180).

[30] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.165.

[31] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.176.

[32] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.165.

[33] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.165.

[34] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.165.

[35] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.165.

[36] Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.178.

[37] Christian Ethicks: or, Divine Morality, Opening the Way to Blessedness, By the Rules of Vertue and Reason by Tho. Traherne B.D. Author of the Roman Forgeries. (London: For Jonathan Edwin, 1675). See note[1] above. Jonathan Edwin "Dealt in all kinds of literature from sixpenny pamphlets dealing with the lives of pirates, to folio histories and classics"; he entered books in the Term Catalogues between 1671 and 1679 (see Henry R. Plomer, A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1668 to 1725, Oxford, 1922, p.111).

[38] Pierre Charron, De la Sagesse Trois Livres (1601); tr. Samson Lennard, Of Wisdome Three Books (1612). Charron was greatly influenced by his friendship with Montaigne; he was severally accused of atheism.

[39] Richard Cumberland, De Legibus Naturae (London: E. Flesher for Nathaniel Hooke, 1672); tr. John Maxwell, A Treatise of the Laws of Nature (London: By R. Phillips, 1727).

[40] Richard Cumberland, A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, tr. John Maxwell (London: By R. Phillips, 1727), p.41.

[41] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, p.40

[42] Traherne can even be seen as a direct precursor of the "Enlightenment" if "Its dominant conviction was that right reasoning could find true knowledge and could lead men to felicity" (Denys Hay, "Enlightenment", Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1967, vol.8, p.599).

[43] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, pp.40-41.

[44] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, p.41.

[45] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, p.41.

[46] Thomas Clifford, first Lord Clifford of Chudleigh (1630-1637); Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington (1618-1685); George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham (1628-1687); Anthony Ashley Cooper, first Earl of Shaftesbury (1621-1683); John Maitland, second Earl and first Duke of Lauderdale (1616-1682).

[47] The Diary of Samuel Pepys, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews (London, 1970 - in progress), vol.1, p.263 (10 October 1660).

[48] The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol.8, pp.410-11 (31 August 1667).

[49] The Diary of Samual Pepys, vol.8, p.411 (31 August 1667).

[50] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of Charles II, 1667 (London, 1866), p.457 (11 September 1667).

[51] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667, p.456 (11 September 1667).

[52] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667-68 (London, 1893), p.138 (2 January 1667/68).

[53] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667-68, p.61 (4 December 1667).

[54] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667-68, p.549 (22 August 1668).

[55] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667, p.457 (11 September 1667).

[56] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1667-68, p.238 (18 February 1667/68).

[57] Matthew Hale (1609-1676), lawyer and future Chief Justice; Hezekiah Burton (d.1681), Bridgeman's Chaplain until 1669; Edward Stillingfleet (1635-1699), Chaplain to the King, Bishop of Worcestor in 1689; John Tillotson (1630-1694), Chaplain to the King, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1691.

[58] Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, ed. Osmund Airey, vol.1 (Oxford, 1897), p.465.

[59] Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, ed. P. Bliss (4 vols., London, 1813-20), vol.4, p.513.

[60] Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.1, p.466.

[61] The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol.9, p.425 (24 January 1668/69).

[62] "In the last analysis . . . Charles was prepared to adopt whatever religious policy seemed most likely to enhance his political power" (Maurice Lee, The Cabal, Urbana, 1965, pp.10-11). See also "The King's Vows" (Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714, vol.1, ed. George de F. Lord, New Haven and London, 1963, pp.159-62): "I will have a religion then all of my own, Where Papist from Protestant shall not be known, But if it grow troublesome, I will have none" (ll.7-9); "If this please not, I'll reign upon any condition" (l.46).

[63] Quoted in Maurice Lee, The Cabal (Urbana, 1965), p.80, from P.R.O., S.P. 104/177, f.84.

[64] His Majesties most gracious Speech To both Houses of Parliament, with the Lord Keepers, On Thursday October 10. 1667, (In the Savoy: By the Assigns of J. Bill and C. Barker, 1667).

[65] His Majesties most gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament, with the Lord Keepers, On Tuesday October 19. 1669, (In the Savoy: By the Assigns of J. Bill and C. Barker, 1669).

66 His Majesties most gracious Speech . . . October 19. 1669.

67 His Majesties most gracious Speech To Both Houses of Parliament, with the Lord Keepers, On Monday February 14. 1669/70 (In the Savoy: By the Assigns of J. Bill and C. Barker, 1669/70).

68 His Majesties most gracious Speech . . . October 19. 1669.

69 His Majesties most gracious Speech . . . October 10. 1667.

70 His Majesties most gracious Speech . . . February 14. 1669/70.

71 Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.2, p.3.

72 His Majesties Declaration to all his Loving Subjects, March 15 1671/72 (In the Savoy: By the Assigns of J. Bill and C. Barker, 1671/72).

73 "Nostradamus' Prophecy" (1672; Poems on Affairs of State, vol.1, pp.185-89), ll.7-30.

74 The Diary of John Evelyn, ed. Esmond de Beer (Oxford, 1955), vol.3, pp.517-18 (14 November 1668).

75 Sir Orl. Bridgeman's Conveyances (London, 1682), A2^{r}.

76 Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.1, p.455.

77 Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.1, p.454.

78 Edward Foss, The Judges of England (London, 1848-64), vol.7, p.63.

79 The Judges of England, vol.7, pp.60,61.

80 The Judges of England, vol.7, p.63.

81 Roger North, The Life of . . . Francis North, Baron of Guilford (London, 1742), p.88.

82 The Life of . . . North, p.198.

83 The Life of . . . North, pp.198,88.

84 The Life of . . . North, pp.88-89.

85 The Life of . . . North, p.89.

86 Roger North, Examen: or, An Inquiry into the credit and veracity of a pretended Complete History (London, 1740), p.38.

87 Examen, p.39.

[88] Examen, p.39.

[89] Examen, p.39.

[90] Locke had also been a contemporary of Traherne at Oxford, matriculating at Christ Church in 1652.

[91] A plan of Whitehall in 1680 shows the Lord Keeper's room near the Banqueting Hall (reproduced in Harold Hartley, ed., The Royal Society: Its Origins and Founders, London, 1960, pl.27).

[92] The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol.8, pp.420-21 (4 September 1667).

[93] William Riley Parker, Milton: A Biography (Oxford, 1968), vol.1, p.623.

[94] Burton and Pepys dined together in Cambridge in 1659/60 (The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol.1, pp.66-67, 25 February 1659/60).

[95] Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, vol.4, p.513.

[96] The Cambridge Platonists were known as "latitude men".

[97] Tillotson married Wilkins' daughter; Wilkins lived for a time, and in fact died, at the Tillotsons' house in Chancery Lane.

[98] Matthew Hale, Contemplations Moral and Divine (London: By William Godbid for William Shrewsbury and John Leigh, 1676).

[99] Traherne mentions Stillingfleet in the entry under the heading "Philosophie" in the Commonplace Book (CB 77^{v},78^{r-v},79^{r-v}).

[100] Andrew Marvell, The Rehearsal Transpros'd (London: Printed by A. B. for the Assigns of John Calvin and Theodore Beza, 1672); The Rehearsal Transpros'd: The Second Part (London: For Nathaniel Ponder, 1673).

[101] Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.1, pp.467-68.

[102] Andrew Marvell, The Rehearsal Tranpros'd and The Rehearsal Transpros'd: The Second Part, ed. D. I. B. Smith (Oxford, 1971), p.51; Poems and Letters, ed. H. M. Margoliouth, Third edition revised by P. Legouis and E. Duncan-Jones (Oxford, 1971), vol.2, pp.109-10.

[103] [George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham], The Rehearsal (London: For Thomas Dring, 1672).

[104] See William Hilton Kelliher, Andrew Marvell: Poet and Politician, 1621-1678 (Catalogue of an enhibition at the British Museum, London, 1978), p.79.

[105] Joan Webber, The Eloquent 'I': Style and Self in Seventeenth Century Prose (Madison and London, 1968), p.225.

106 John Milton, Paradise Lost, Book 11, ll.712-727 (The Poems of John Milton, ed. Helen Darbishire, London, 1961, p.426).

107 Gilbert Burnet, History of my own Time, vol.1, p.454; The Judges of England, vol.7, p.63; "Nostradamus' Prophecy" (Poems on Affairs of State, vol.1, pp.185-89), ll.27,11,16.

108 "Nostradamus' Prophecy" (Poems on Affairs of State, vol.1, pp.185-89), ll.13,21,23-24.

109 Milton, Of True Religion (Works, vol.6), p.178.

110 "Those older historians who used to call this the period of 'the Commercial Revolution' were not after all far wrong" (see Charles Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, 1603-1763, London, 1965, p.161; see the whole of Chapter 8, "England the World's Entrepot", pp.160-84, for many of the figures quoted in this section).

111 Quoted in Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, p.165.

112 Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, p.184.

113 Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, p.171.

114 The East India Company's stock in 1660, for example, comprised about £400,000 at 90%; by 1703 this had increased to £1,600,000 at 120% plus £2,300,000 at 186% in the "New Company" (see Wilson, England's Apprenticeship, pp.173-74).

115 Christopher Wren (junior), Parentalia: or, Memoirs of the Family of the Wrens (London: For T. Osborn and R. Dodsley, 1750).

116 The Works of John Dryden, gen. ed. H. T. Swedenborg (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956 - in progress), vol.1, p.49.

117 The Works of John Dryden, vol.1, p.49.

118 The Works of John Dryden, vol.1, p.49.

119 Memoirs of Sir John Reresby, ed. Andrew Browning (Glasgow, 1936), p.62.

120 David Ogg, England in the Reign of Charles II, second edition (Oxford, 1955), vol.2, p.745.

121 The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1839-45), vol.2, p.xi.

122 The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol.2, pp.ix-xxiv.

123 The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol.2, p.xvii.

124 The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol.2, pp.xii-xiii.

125 The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol.2, p.xv.

126 The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol.9, p.298 (3 September 1668).

127 [Richard Leigh], The Censure of the Rota (Oxford: By H. H. for Francis Oxlad, 1673), p.3.

128 John Bramhall, Castigations of Mr. Hobbes His Last Animadversions . . . With an Appendix concerning The Catching of Leviathan (London: By E. T. for J. Crook, 1658), pp.463,490, 491,503,543.

129 [J. Shafte], The Great Law of Nature: or, Self-Preservation Examined, Asserted, and Vindicated from Mr. Hobbes his Abuses (London: Printed for the Author, [1673]), p.6.

130 John Eachard, Mr. Hobb's State of Nature Considered (London: By E. T. and R. H. for Nathaniel Brooke, 1672), A1^{r}; [Thomas Tenison], The Creed of Mr. Hobbes Examined (1670; second edition, London: For Francis Tyton, 1671), p.2.

131 Quentin Skinner, "The Ideological Context of Hobbes' Political Thought", The Historical Journal, 9 (1966), pp.286-317.

132 Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down (1972), Penguin edition (Harmondsworth, 1975), p.389.

133 Hill, The World Turned Upside Down, p.388.

134 Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan: or, The Matter, Forme and Power of A Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civill (London: For Andrew Crooke, 1651), pp.29-30.

135 Hobbes, Leviathan, p.47.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

The Royal Society and Natural Philosophy, 1660-1674

[1] For a full contemporary list of members of the Royal Society, reproduced from an original Ballot List for 30 November 1671, see The Diary of Robert Hooke, ed. Henry W. Robinson and Walter Adams (London, 1935), facing p.4.

[2] The Works of John Dryden, gen. ed. H. T. Swedenborg (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956 - in progress), vol.17, p.15.

[3] See Thomas Birch, The History of the Royal Society of London for Improving of Natural Knowledge (London, 1756-57), vol.2, p.138; vol.3, p.142. Further reference by date alone.

[4] See Gustav Parthey, Wenzel Hollar: Beschreibendes Verzeichnis seiner Kupferstiche (Berlin, 1953) and Arthur M. Hind, Wenceslaus Hollar and his views of London and Windsor in the Seventeenth Century (London, 1922). "London from Milford Stairs" (Parthey No.9110; Hind No.80) and "London from the top of Arundel House" (Parthey No.1011; Hind No.81) are complemented by two views of the courtyard of Arundel House (Parthey Nos.1034-35; Hind Nos.82-83) and by the first section of the "Long View of London from Bankside" (Parthey No.1014; Hind No. 16), which shows the juxtaposition of Arundel and Essex Houses in relation to the rest of contemporary London.

[5] For a detailed account of the Society's activities see Thomas Birch, The History of the Royal Society of London for Improving of Natural Knowledge (London, 1756-57), vol.2, p.138 - vol.3, p.142. Birch's History is an abstract of the Philosophical Transactions published by the Royal Society.

[6] Samuel Butler, Characters and Passages from Notebooks, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1908), p.344.

[7] See WFB IV.361-62.

[8] Abraham Cowley, Poems, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1905), p.449.

[9] Richard Cumberland, A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, tr. John Maxwell (London: By R. Phillips, 1727), pp.40-41.

[10] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, p.41.

[11] A Treatise of the Laws of Nature, p.41.

[12] Cowley, Poems, p.451.

[13] Cowley, Poems, p.449.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

The Early Notebook and the Commonplace Book

[1] The headings in the Commonplace Book are:

Aristotles Philosophie
Of Judicial Astrologie Its Original
Astronomie and Admiration
Atoms
Authoritie

Banishment
Beatifick
Beatitude
Beginnning
Bounty

Capacity
Cause
Censure
Ceremonies
Chaos
Choise vid. Electione
Charitie
Circulation
Cohasion
Cold
Colors
Communion
Condescention
Conscience
Contemplation
Continence
Consultation
Creation
Creature
Corruption
Counsell
Cynick
Custom

Darkness
Death
Deitie
Demonstration
Dependence
Desire
Divinity
Dominion

Encouragement
Earth

Election
Empty
The Elective Sect
End
Essenes
Ethicks
Epicurisme
Evill
Experience

Fall
Fire
Firmament
Force
Friendship
Friendship with God
Freedom
Fruit
Fury
Fancie
Fate

Generation
GOD
Good
Grace
Grove
Guide

Heaven
Humane
Hipocrisie

Idea
Images
Idolatrie
Image
Impossibilitie
Imitation
Intercession
Immortalitie
Incarnation
Inclination
Incorporeall
Instinct
Invocation
Intelligence vid. Habit

Incertaintie
Interest
Irresistible

Joy

Liberalitie
Libertie
Light. The Light of Nature. vid. Reason
Logick

MAN vid. Capacity
Matter
Mathematicks
Medicine
Metaphysicks
Monarchie
Moralitie
Motion
Multitude
Musick

Nature
Neighbour

Omnipotencie
One
Operation

Paganisme
Passion
Perfection
Poett
Pope
Preparation of Objects
Philosophie
Providence
Proverbs
Purgative
Purgation
Pythagoras
Prudence
Punishment

Reason
Retirement vid. Essenes
Repentance

Sagacitie
Salt
Scholemen
Scepticisme
Silence
Stoicisme
Soul vid. Capacity
Son
Sun
Superstition

Temperance
Theologie
Treasure

Vice
Virtue

[2] See Thomas Birch, The History of the Royal Society of London for Improving of Natural Knowledge (London, 1756-57), 8 February 1671/72.

[3] There is a quotation under this heading from Robert Boyle's New Experiments and Observations touching Cold (London: For John Crooke, 1665).

[4] Carol L. Marks, "Thomas Traherne's Commonplace Book", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 58 (1964), p.459.

[5] In the General Scolium added to the second (1713) edition of the Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica (1687), Newton states that "The most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being" (Isaac Newton, Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy and His System of the World, trans. Andrew Motte, rev. Florian Cajori, Berkeley, 1934, p.544). He deduces that there must be an "intelligent Agent" if only because "Blind metaphysical necessity . . . could produce no variety of things" (Mathematical Principles, p.546). His characteristic

emphasis is represented by what appears almost as an admission that he is "forced to ascribe" physical phenomena to "the counsel and contrivance of a voluntary Agent" (Letter to Richard Bentley, 10 December 1692; Papers and Letters on Natural Philosophy, ed. I. B. Cohen and R. E. Schofield, Cambridge, 1958, p.282). Newton claimed that "When I wrote my treatise [the Principia] about our System, I had an Eye upon such Principles as might work with considering Men for the Belief of a Deity" (Papers and Letters, p.280); but elsewhere he reflects a contemporary tendency to speak of God as an "Agent" who "exists necessarily". Gale and Traherne at times anticipate this attitude, which may be indicative of an underlying doubt and an attempt to reaffirm, almost dogmatically, the "necessary" existence of God.

[6] Newton's God, too, is "all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all power to perceive, to understand and to act" (Mathematical Principles, p.546).

[7] Coleridge on the Seventeenth Century, ed. Roberta Florence Brinkley and Louis I. Bredvold (Duke University, 1955), p.368.

[8] See Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (1971), Peregrine edition (Harmondsworth, 1978), pp.268,322; Christopher Hill, The World Turned Upside Down (1972), Penguin edition (Harmondsworth, 1975), p.185.

[9] "Hermes Trismegistus", or "thrice-great Hermes" meant either the Egyptian God Thoth, or Hermes, or Mercury (or all three at once). The Hermetic works were written, in both Greek and Latin, by men of Greek neo-Platonic education in Egypt in the third and fourth centuries A.D.. The name "Hermes Trismegistus" was an attempt to claim absolute originality and authority for writings that were supposed to be by the God himself.

[10] Newton believed that "religion and Philosophy are to be preserved distinct. We are not to introduce divine revelations into Philosophy nor Philosophical opinions into religion" (Isaac Newton, Theological Manuscripts, ed. H. McLachlan, Liverpool, 1950, p.58). In this he followed Bacon ("give to faith that only which is faith's", Novum Organum, WFB I.147-365, I.65) but represents an almost opposite tendency to that of Traherne and the Cambridge Platonists, and some natural philosophers, like Boyle, for example (it is perhaps significant in this respect that Newton's concern is for mathematical principles of natural philosophy). "To Newton, the transcendent personal God, with His spiritual counterpart man, stands on one side, and on the other the mechanical system of matter, motion and force. . . . Newton has apparently no conception of the need of a theory of knowledge to bridge the gulf between God and His world" (Stephen Hobhouse in his edition of Selected Mystical Writings of William Law, Second edition, London, 1948, p.421). For the suggestion that Newton may at one time have sought such a "bridge" in the study and practice of alchemy and associated "pseudo-science", see John Maynard Keynes' view of Newton as "the last of the magicians" ("Newton the Man", Newton Tercentenary Celebrations, Cambridge, 1947).

[11] See Chapter 2, note[9] (p.321 above) for correspondences between Bacon's text and Traherne's notes.

[12] Francis Bacon, Novum Organum (1620; WFB I.147-365), I.60.

[13] See Brian Vickers, Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose (Cambridge, 1968).

[14] D. G. James, The Dream of Learning (Oxford, 1951), p.18.

[15] Harold Fisch, Jerusalem and Albion (London, 1964), p.86.

[16] Brian Vickers, Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose, pp.4-5.

[17] Robert Ellrodt, "Scientific Curiosity and Metaphysical Poetry in the Seventeenth Century", Modern Philology, 61 (1963-64), p.197.

[18] For a view of this problem as fundamental to later seventeenth century thought, see Basil Willey, The Seventeenth Century Background (London, 1934).

[19] Several of the Cambridge Platonists held that faith and reason were reconcileable, even complementary: "There is nothing so intrinsically Rational, as Religion is" (Benjamin Whichcote, Moral and Religious Aphorisms, 457, ed. W. R. Inge, London, 1930). Traherne said that "Faith is by Reason Confirmed, and Reason is by Faith Perfected" (CE 112).

[20] The quotation is from Brian Vickers, of Bacon (Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose, pp.4-5).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

Select Meditations

[1] Abraham Cowley, "Ode. Upon His Majesties Restoration and Return", Poems, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1905), p.421, ll.32-35.

[2] The Diary of John Evelyn, ed. Esmond de Beer (Oxford, 1955), vol.3, p.246 (29 May 1660).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

Christian Ethicks

[1] See Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, I.7.1098 a 17-18; I.13.1102 a 5-6; X.7.1177 a 12-13.

[2] [Walter Charleton], Epicurus's Morals, Collected . . . And faithfully Englished (London: By W. Wilson for Henry Herringman, 1656), p.2.

[3] Epicurus's Morals, p.2.

NOTES

Postscript

[1] Carol L. Marks, "Traherne's Church's Year Book", Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 60 (1966), p.71.

[2] Marks in PBSA, 60 (1966), p.72.

[3] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, "A Satyr against Reason and Mankind", ll.216-19 (The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, ed. David M. Vieth, New Haven and London, 1968, p.101).

APPENDIX

The Relationship of the notes in Traherne's Ficino Notebook to Ficino's Commentaries on and Epitomes of Platonic Dialogues

(See Marsilii Ficinii Florentini in Omnia Platonis Opera Epitomae, sive Argumenta, Commentaria, Collectanea, et Annotationes in Marsilio Ficino, Opera Omnia, Basel, 1576, repr. Turin, 1962, vol.2, pp.116-536).

Pages in Opera Omnia, vol.2	Ficino's title	Leaf of FN	Traherne's title	Contents
118-19	In Hipparchum Platonis, Epitomae	10	De Lucri Cupiditate Hipparchus	Epitome of (Hipparchus)
119	De Philosophia, sive Amatore, Epitomae	11	De philosophia Amatores	Epitome of (Erastae, or Amatores)
119-20	Theages, vel de sapientia, Epitomae			Epitome of (Theages)
120-21	In Menonem de virtute, Epitomae	12	De virtute Meno	Epitome of Meno
121	In Alcibiadem primum, vel de natura hominis, Epitomae	13	De natura hominis Alcibiades I	Epitome of (Alcibiades I)
122	In Alcibiadem Secundum, vel de voto, Epitomae	14	De voto Alcibiades 2	Epitome of (Alcibiades II)
122-23	In Minoem, vel de Lege, Epitomae	15	De Lege Minos	Epitome of (Minos)
123-24	In Euthyphronem, vel de sanctitate, Epitomae	16	De Sanctitate Euthyphro	Epitome of Euthyphro

124-202	Marsilii Ficinii in commentaria suum Parmenidem	17	De uno Rerum Principio & de Ideis Parmenides	Commentary on Parmenides
203-48	In Philebum Marsilii Ficinii Commentatorium, Liber I	)))-18	De Summo Bono Philebus	Commentary on and collection from Philebus
249-65	Collectaneorum Marsilii Ficinii Florentini in Philebum Lib.II	)		
266-67	In Hippias, vel De pulchro, Epitomae	20	De pulchro Hippias major	Epitome of (Greater Hippias)
268-69	In Platonis Lysidem, vel De amicitia, Epitomae	19	De amicitia Lysis	Epitome of Lysis
270-77	In Thaetetum Platonis, vel De scientia, Epitomae			Epitome of Thaetetus
277-80	In Platonis Ionem, vel de furore poetico, Epitomae	29-31	De furore Poetico Io	Epitome of Ion
280-90	Commentaria & Argumenta in Platonis Sophistam			Commentary on and argument of Sophist
290-92	In librum Platonis de regno, vel civilem, Epitome	21-22	De Regno Civilis	Epitome of Statesman
292-96	In Protagoram Epitome			Epitome of Protagoras
296-99	In Euthydemus Epitomae	27-28	Contra Sophistas & de vera Sapientia Euthydemus sive Litigiosus	Epitome of Euthydemus
299-300	In Hippiam minor Epitome			Epitome of Lesser Hippias

300-03	In Charmidem, vel de temperantia, epitome	23	De Temperantia Charmides	Epitome of Charmides
303-05	In Lachetem, vel de Fortitudine, Epitome	24-26	De ffortitudine Marclij ficini argumentum Laches	Epitome of Laches
305-10	In Cratylum, vel de recta nominum ratione, epitome			Epitome of Cratylus
311-16	In Gorgiam epitome			Epitome of Gorgias
316-59	In Convivium Platonis de Amore, Commentarium			Commentary on Symposium
359-82	In Phaedrum Commentaria & Argumenta			Commentary on and argument of Phaedrus
382-385	In Apologiam Socratis Epitome			Epitome of Apology, or Socrates' Defence
386-91	In Critonem, Epitome			Epitome of Crito
391-92	In Menexenum, Epitome	32	Menexenus sive Epitaphius	Epitome of Menexenus
392-94	In dialogum primum de Republica, vel de Iusto, Epitome	34-36	De Justo sive De Republica Dialogus 1	Epitome of Republic, Book 1
395-96	In secundum dialogum, de Iusto, epitome	36-38	Dialogus 2	Epitome of Republic, Book 2
396-98	In dialogum tertium, de Iusto, epitome	38-41	Dialogus 3	Epitome of Republic, Book 3

398-400	In dialogum quartum, de Iusto, epitome	41-44	Dialogus 4	Epitome of Republic, Book 4
400-02	In dialogum quintum, de Iusto, epitome	44-45	Dialogus 5	Epitome of Republic, Book 5

Traherne takes no notes from the remainder of the work: Epitomes of Republic, Books 6-7; Commentary on Republic, Book 8; Epitomes of Republic, Books 9-10; Commentary on Timaeus; Epitome of Critias; Epitomes of Laws, Books 1-12; Epitome of (Epinomis); Argument of the (Letters) (Opera Omnia, vol.2, pp.402-536).

FN 58 bears the title "Argumentum Marcilij Ficini Florentini In Librum Mercurij Trismegisti" and a short note from Mercurii Trismegisti Liber de Potestate & Sapientia Dei, cui titulus PIMANDER. Marsilio Ficino Florentino Interprete (Opera Omnia, vol.2, pp.836-871).

(Brackets around the title of a dialogue indicate that the dialogue is not now considered to be by Plato).

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